

INDIA AND PAKISTAN ON THE BRINK • IRAQ WAITS FOR WAR

In These Times

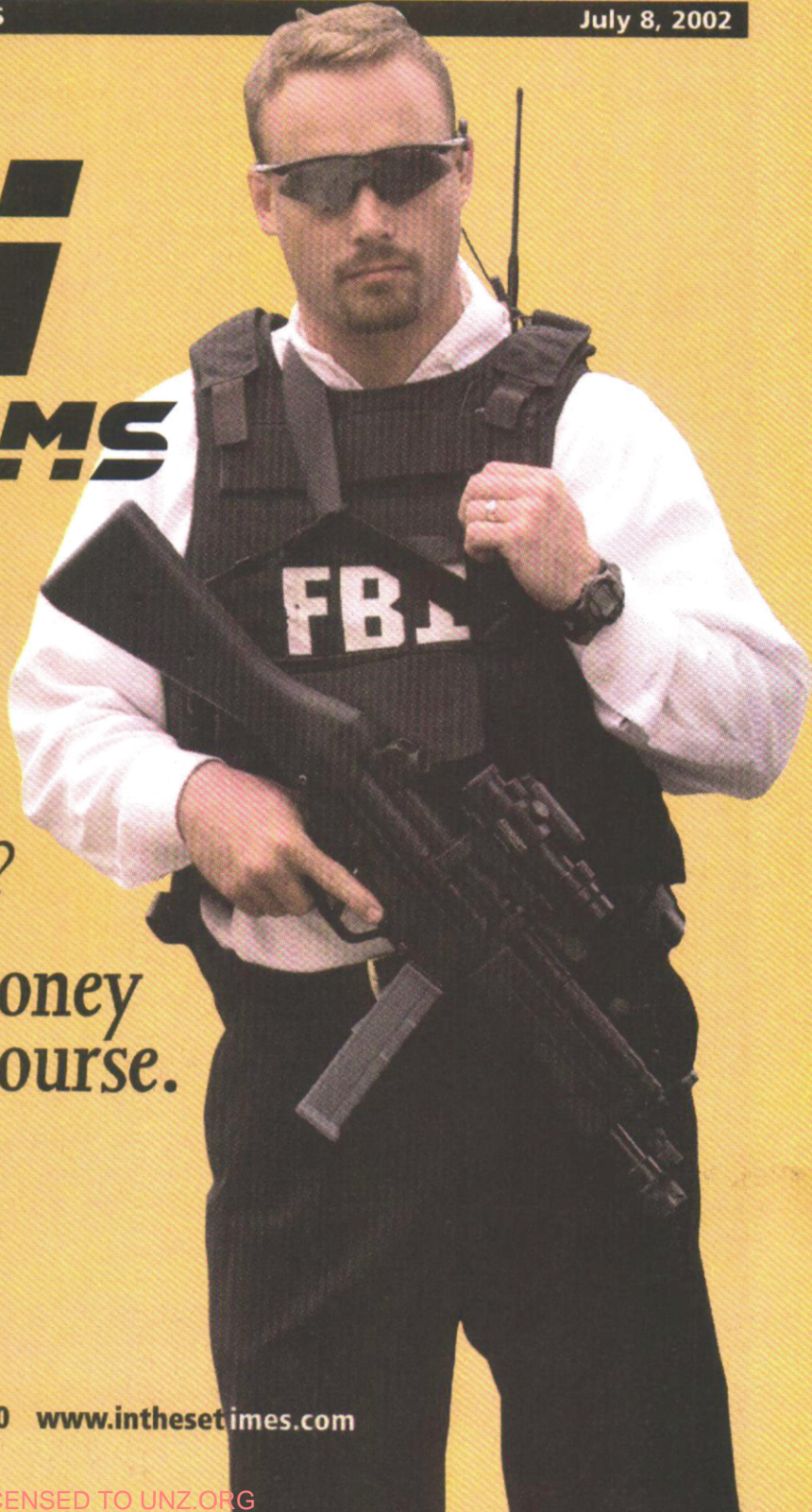
INDEPENDENT NEWS & VIEWS

July 8, 2002

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SAME OLD
PROBLEMS

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Editorial

FBI, Good-bye

Give defense a chance. Why not use this as a rallying cry for progressives?

The evidence is in. The September 11 hijackers were clumsy and broke most elementary rules of secrecy. Many of them knew each other; some even flew test runs in a group. They sometimes used their own names. For a chilling indictment of the country's first line of defense against terror, read the memo by one of the FBI's own agents, Coleen Rowley of the Minneapolis bureau, on how 9/11 might have been prevented. Rowley isn't a dangerous radical, but a career cop who is ashamed of the FBI.

We should be too. A simple lesson can be drawn from the scandals engulfing the FBI: The United States never tried defensive measures against al-Qaeda. Far from needing new legal powers or an expanded budget, the FBI needs a good whipping—and a decent burial.

Formed in 1908, the FBI rushed into political surveillance during World War I, hounding draft resisters and radical immigrants. Hooked on Red Scares, the bureau's authoritarian boss, J. Edgar Hoover, intimidated political opponents through spying and lying campaigns. Dubious and downright false claims of disloyalty have stood behind every previous drive to eradicate threats to homeland security. Among the left, the appearance of disloyalty even became a badge of honor.

It's time to shut down a domestic security agency that notched its greatest victories against African-American civil rights leaders, dangerous radicals such as Albert Einstein, and Vietnam War protesters. Yet when it came to al-Qaeda, the FBI ignored warnings from its own agents about foreign visitors at flight schools learning to take off but not to land.

Progressives must seize this as an opportunity to build—for the first time in American history—a democratic means of internal security. It isn't enough to call for a good defense and invoke the usual (and justified) caveats about the need to respect civil liberties and avoid unnecessary force. With so many politicians of the center advocating war (see the recent call by House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt for an invasion of Iraq), the left needs to do the unusual: Think deeply about domestic security prob-

lems and conceive a defensive plan for securing the homeland.

To be sure, the whole concept of "domestic security" first must be retrieved from the junk pile of conservatism before any serious alternatives can be designed. Given the historical baggage, there's a temptation to dismiss security as illegitimate—or worse, as an invariable cover for repression. That security measures masked repression of dissent in the past does not mean that the left must abdicate serious thinking about the subject. There is nothing inherently authoritarian about defending U.S. residents from terrorists. There are ways to improve security that don't require assassination, torture and racial profiling.

Start with diplomacy. Halt the folly of chasing terrorists around the world, from the mountains of the former Soviet republic of Georgia to the jungles of the Philippines. End the cave-hopping, cat-and-mouse game in Afghanistan. Let the Pakistanis, Malaysians, Colombians and the rest arm and train their own terror gangs. Remove American troops from Saudi Arabia. Stop threatening Iraq with military punishment. Begin official contacts with Iran. Bring an international peacekeeping force to Israel and Palestine to promote fair-

Far from needing new legal powers or an expanded budget, the FBI needs a good whipping—and a decent burial.

ness and reconciliation. Give Muslims around the world a reason to view America as a defender of democratic ideals rather than as an overfed bully.

At home, Congress should disband the FBI and create a new domestic security agency, solely dedicated to preventing acts of terror, whatever their source. (Remember Oklahoma City?) The anti-terror agency would be overseen by a board of citizen directors—a kind of grand police-review board—some of whom could be directly elected, others appointed by Congress and the president.

The answer to terror isn't taking war to the far corners of the globe. To quote an old sports cliché, defense wins championships. Now let's give defense a chance.

—G. Pascal Zachary

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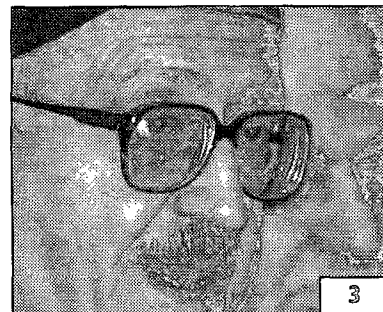
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Kissing Jane Addams

Reading Eugene McCarraher's review of Jean Bethke Elshtain's new book ("Little Big Woman," May 13), I conclude that not only is Jane Addams still in need of a socialist-feminist biographer, but Elshtain is in need of a lesbian-feminist critic. I cannot tell from McCarraher's review whether Elshtain deals at all with Addams' lesbian identity.

McCarraher does tell us that Elshtain asserts Addams never joined the modern "cult of frankness." However Addams was not shy about her 40-year relationship with Mary Rozet Smith. It has been reported that "when they traveled, Addams always wired ahead to make sure the hotel would have a double bed for them."

Lillian Faderman concludes in *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers* that only in the last few years can we acknowledge, without diminishing her stature, that Addams—whether she knew to use the term or not—was what our day would consider lesbian. She devoted her entire emotional life to women, she considered herself married to a woman, and she believed that she was "delivered" by their shared love.

This aspect of her history sheds much light on Addams' achievement and sensibilities. Why would a reviewer in *In These Times* colude in obscuring it in 2002?

Susan Chacin
Berkeley, California

Eugene McCarraher replies: Thanks to Susan Chacin for her sharp and spirited letter. While her main gripe is with Elshtain, I do deserve some of her ire. Elshtain herself touches ineptly on the subject of Addams' sexuality early on in the book, but then moves briskly onward. She writes rather cryptically that Addams and Smith "had a special relationship," but quickly insists that "we are the ones who insist on sexualizing it to conform to the political exigencies of our age." After dismissing concerns such as Chacin's as misguided efforts "to reduce all social and political phenomena to either psychology or sex," she drops the matter altogether.

When an author explicitly states that she will not discuss something, a reviewer can either spotlight and criticize the omission or concentrate on what the author does cover. Because Elshtain's is an intellectual and, to a somewhat lesser degree, political biography, I chose the second course, knowing full well that this might dissatisfy some readers. But Chacin rightly faults me. (I do object, though, to the word "collude,"

which suggests that I'm in cahoots with Gary Bauer and the "family values" squad.)

That said, we would still need a clear, well-evidenced and theoretically informed argument that illuminates Addams' social thought in the light of her sexuality. There are plenty of journalistic and academic venues in which Chacin and others could articulate their insights into Addams' work. Though I strongly suspect that Elshtain would be averse to their perspectives, I and many others would welcome the enrichment they could bring to our knowledge. "You're all a part of it," as Jane Addams would say.

Equal Outrage

I have found it somewhat disappointing, though not surprising, that *In These Times* continues to supply an unbalanced analysis of the Middle East. While the Israeli occupation is certainly to be condemned, I would expect at least an equal amount of moral outrage at the Palestinian bombings of Israeli civilian sites.

The left seems to be able to show understanding for the "suicide" bombers based on several decades of oppression—couldn't some understanding also be shown for Israeli overreaction based on two millennia of anti-Semitism, pogroms and the Holocaust?

And how would the proposed Palestinian state stand up to the ideals of the left? Would workers be able to unionize and expect a fair wage? Would women have equal rights? Would there be tolerance of ethnic and reli-

gious minorities? I think we all know the answers to these questions.

Sanford Stein
Evanston, Illinois

In the Driver's Seat

I grind my teeth whenever I see a story with a reference to the "anti-globalization movement." As the philosopher Wittgenstein once said, "Language is not merely the vehicle of thought, it is the driver." From the reading I've done and the protests I've been to, it is obvious to me that we are not anti-globalization. How could people who travel to Brazil for the World Social Forum be "anti-globalization"? How could people in solidarity with the Palestinians be "anti-globalization"? Activists should take the lead in defining themselves in a positive way, maybe using the term "global justice movement." As long as we ourselves use an "anti-" term, others will think of us as reactionary flat-earthers, not visionaries.

Zachary Nowak
Rochester, New York

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Terry LaBan



Inside the Axis of Evil

Iraq waits and worries about a U.S. attack

By Jeremy Scahill

BAGHDAD—After 12 years of devastating economic sanctions and regular U.S. bombings, Iraqis have become accustomed to history repeating itself through successive U.S. administrations. With “little Bush,” as Iraqis call the current U.S. president, threatening to change the regime in Baghdad, people are again bracing themselves for war.

Baghdad TV has been broadcasting videos of Iraqi special forces training for a U.S. invasion, and the chant “Down, down Bush” (originally aimed at Bush’s father during the Gulf War) is making a comeback in Iraqi cities and villages.

For many here, the question isn’t whether Bush will attack, but rather when and under what pretext. Late last month, the United Nations announced that a new round of talks with Iraqi officials, aimed at returning U.N. weapons inspectors to Iraq, will be held in Vienna in early July. As with the U.S. bombing in December 1998, all signals point to the inspections issue as a possible breaking point for war.

In an interview at his office in Baghdad, Tariq Aziz, deputy prime minister and a member of the Revolutionary Command Council, Iraq’s central decision-making body, told *In These Times* that the Bush administration may seek to use the inspectors “to prepare the ground for a military attack.”

“Iraq is not producing any weapons of mass destruction,” Aziz insists. “All the pretexts which are being used against Iraq and its leadership are false pretexts. The issue is oil; the issue is to impose American imperialistic control over Iraq.”

Aziz says the Vienna talks will not be helpful unless weapons inspectors return as part of a comprehensive U.N. plan to end Iraq’s isolation. “The inspectors stayed in Iraq for around eight years,” he says, “and they did not report honestly to the Security Council that their mission had been accomplished. If they return and go back to the



TAMM AL-RUBAHIY / GETTY

Iraq’s Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz. In an attempt to ward off a potential attack from the U.S., Iraq has increased diplomatic activity in the Mideast.

previous vicious circle, that’s not going to solve any problems for the people of Iraq.”

Officials in Baghdad want a clear timeline for U.N. inspectors to verify that Iraq is complying with Security Council resolutions. They say inspectors will be permitted to enter the country only if the process produces a specific road map for lifting economic sanctions. But the Bush administration, like Clinton’s before it, says bluntly that this will not happen as long as Saddam Hussein is in power. Asked if he believed sanctions would ever be lifted with Saddam in power, Aziz says, “I don’t have illusions about the policies of the United States.”

The sanctions were first imposed in 1990 to force Iraq’s withdrawal from Kuwait. Following the Gulf War, they were amended to require certified destruction of Iraq’s non-conventional weapons. After repeated crises over the issue of weapons inspections, key officials during the Clinton administration, including the president himself, consistently undermined U.N. negotiations with Iraq by insisting on “regime change” as another precondition for lifting sanctions. This policy has been codified under the current Bush administration.

But despite the hostilities emanating from Washington, Iraq’s actions are giving ordinary people here some hope that war could be averted. In recent months, when U.S. officials like Vice President Dick Cheney toured the region to drum up support for attacks against Iraq, Baghdad dispatched its own diplomats to each capital in advance to shore up opposition.

The stepped-up diplomacy occurs at the same time that Iraq has resumed trade with several countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. At least publicly, there is almost no support in the region for a new U.S. war against Iraq.

Meanwhile, veteran Iraqi diplomats are doing their best to sound upbeat. “We are ready to cooperate, we are ready for dialogue. We are keeping the ends open,” says Nizar Hamdoun, who served as Iraq’s ambassador to the U.N. from 1992 to 1998. “Let’s not panic. I don’t think war is inevitable. There are always ways of short-cutting such plans.”

For the past 12 years, most ordinary Iraqis have subsisted in utter misery, trapped between a repressive regime and devastating sanctions. Many Iraqis live in fear of the government. Saddam’s name is almost never uttered in any context on the streets, or in the souks and taxis.

Still, people here universally view Washington as their main oppressor. They live with the stark reality that the source of their misery—the sanctions—feeds and nurtures the power of a repressive government over which they have no control. Conservative estimates, drawn from U.N. data, conclude that more than a quarter of a million children under the age of five have died as a direct result of the sanctions. Other estimates put the number much higher.

More than a decade after Washington’s “triumph” in the Gulf War, “little” Bush is resurrecting his father’s unfulfilled promise to bring down Saddam. Iraqis are not alone in the Arab world when they ask, at what cost? “Has [Bush] thought of how many innocent Iraqis will have to die, how many cities will have to be razed to the ground, how many American troops will lose their lives?” asks Baghdad political scientist Jasim Z’boon. “Will he think of this before he sets off to ‘save’ us?” ■

Jeremy Scahill’s reports are broadcast regularly on Pacifica radio.

Deadly Ground

The U.S. stalls on land mines

By Bill Myers

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA—Here in Cambodia, the Killing Fields still kill. The war is over, but the bombs and the rockets and the mines—especially the mines—still lunge from the ground, taking arms, legs and lives as though peace had never come.

So don't tell anyone here the U.S. government's continuing refusal to ban land mines is only symbolic. President Bush is currently "reviewing" the 1997 land mine treaty, which 142 nations have already signed. The treaty forbids countries from producing, buying or using land mines.

In the meantime, Cambodians live—or die—at the other end of that policy question. In April alone, according to Red Cross statistics, Cambodia saw 61 casualties—mostly poor farmers just trying to clear their parcels of land.

Cambodia is one of the most heavily mined places on earth, where anywhere between 4 million and 6 million land mines are still waiting to claim their victims. "It's impossible to tell you how many years it will take to clear," says Khem Sophoan, director general for the Cambodian Mine Action Center, which helps clear Cambodia's ground.

Khem takes the long view. Ask him his goal for the future, and the answer is almost as shocking as anything else you can hear when you talk about land mines. "We would like to reduce to zero victims by 2020," he says. Isn't that a little long to wait for people to stop being maimed and killed? "Well ..."

The battle against land mines here in Cambodia is more concrete than the campaign to get the United States to sign the land mine treaty, because Cambodia's grim experience has given it worldwide expertise. Its deminers went to Kosovo in 1999, and are scheduled to head for Eastern Africa and Afghanistan this summer. Its casualty reporting system is one of the most advanced on the planet, as is its newly developed computerized map of mine fields

and unexploded ordnance (UXO) hot spots in nearly 114,000 villages.

But it's impossible to separate the United States from this narrative. According to Aki Ra, the director of a land mine museum in north central Cambodia, the United States (along with China, which has also refused to sign the treaty) was among the biggest suppliers of land mines to the Khmer Rouge during its guerrilla war with the Vietnamese army in the '80s. Much of the UXO lying in wait came from U.S. bombers during the '70s.

If the United States can contribute to mine removal, why won't it sign the treaty? The Defense Department now says it needs the mines for defense in South Korea and elsewhere, and military contractors are fighting any spending cutback.

But in its own way, the United States pays at least part of the price for all of that mayhem. Washington is one of the largest donors to Cambodia—with nearly \$35 million in aid committed yearly—and, according to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, the United States is also one of the leading donors in helping other countries clear their mines. So refusing the anti-mine treaty means American taxpayers pay on both ends—first to the defense contractors, and then to the people they maim.

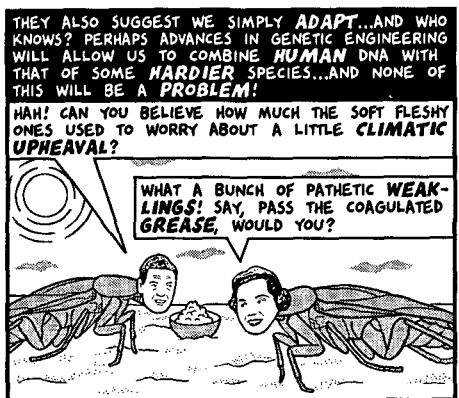
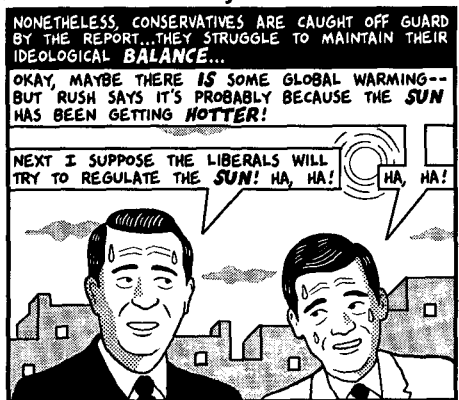
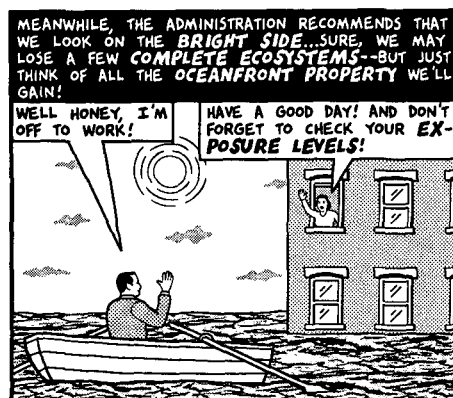
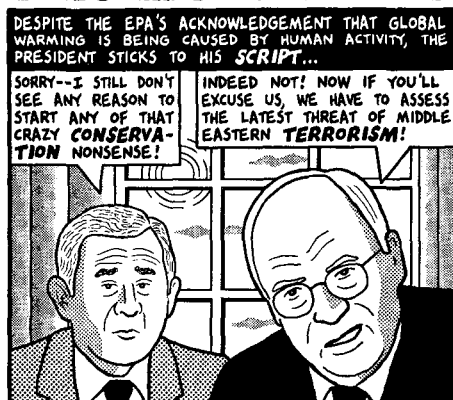
The price tag on these mines for Cambodia and other poor nations is much higher, of course. Besides the cost in lives and livelihood, land mines are a huge drain on an impoverished economy. It costs 65 cents to clear one meter of land, Khem says. That adds up, since nearly half of Cambodian soil is "tainted" by mines and UXO.

This is set against a booming but poor population desperate for land. More than 54 percent of land mine casualties in the past two years have been work-related. It's a sign, activists say, of a coming land crunch that continues to thrust people on top of mines and UXO. The mines also mean that normal development, like building schools and roads and bridges, can't get underway.

And so Khem and his deminers carry on their work. They clear about 15 square kilometers of land per year. If he doesn't get caught up in the politics of the issue, it's because he has his eyes on a bigger prize. "I want my country to be rich," he says. "And healthy." ■

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



Welcome to the Jungle

Meatpackers charged with smuggling immigrants

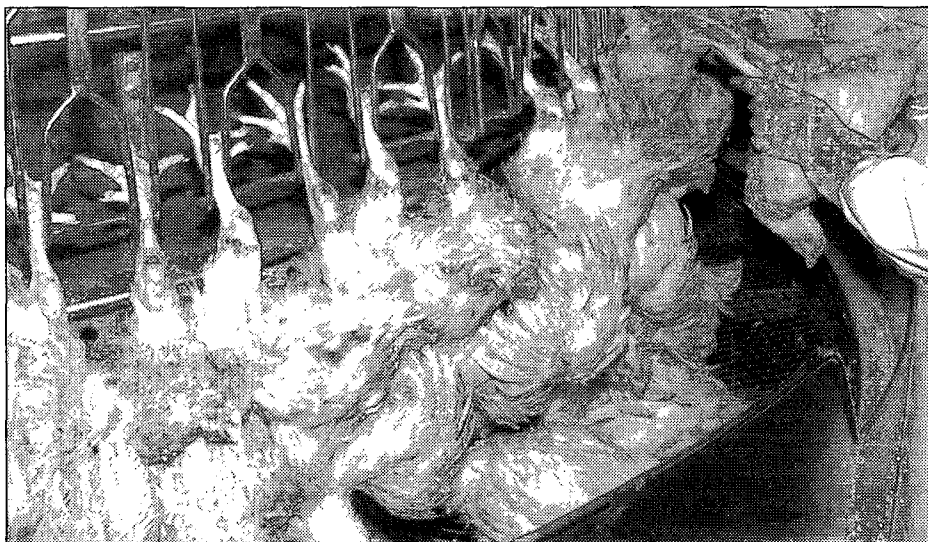
By Leon Lazaroff

Two of America's largest meatpackers have been charged with smuggling undocumented workers into the country, and unions and immigrant advocates say the cases reflect a concerted effort by U.S. companies to lure workers from Mexico and Central America to low-wage jobs in the United States.

In April, a federal judge dismissed charges that Nebraska Beef company officials had set up recruiting and transportation networks that moved undocumented workers, mostly Mexicans and Central Americans, north of the border and furnished them with false documentation.

While the Justice Department pursues an appeal in the Nebraska Beef case, it has launched a similar case against Tyson Foods, the country's largest poultry producer and owner of IBP, the historically anti-union meatpacking giant. That trial is expected to begin next February.

Unions and immigration activists say both cases are evidence that meat and



YVES HERMAN / REUTERS

"Very few human beings want to pull chicken guts or hack cow carcasses for minimum wage."

poultry producers habitually recruit undocumented workers to fill the industry's dirty, dangerous and low-paying jobs. These critics say Tyson and Nebraska Beef were, not aberrations, but natural products of an immigration system that makes it illegal to hire undocumented workers, and a labor system that uses those same workers to depress wages. "This is how labor shortfalls are met and continue to be met in the meatpacking industry," says Milo Mumgaard, executive director of the Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest.

The Nebraska Beef and Tyson smuggling cases could offer an alternative to the conventional portrait of undocumented immigrants evading border patrols to take jobs away from American citizens. A more accurate picture, says Greg Denier of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), would highlight the ways U.S. companies encourage and often pay hiring agents and transportation companies on the border to publicize—through radio advertisements, leaflets and local newspapers—the availability of U.S. jobs.

IN SHORT

BY KRISTIE REILLY

The Doctor Won't See You Now

Workers at call-in centers for Kaiser Permanente, California's largest HMO, were given bonuses for limiting the amount of time they spent on the phone with patients and keeping down the number of doctor visits they set up.

Bonuses of up to 10 percent of their salaries were offered at three centers in Northern California, from January 2000 until last December. Kaiser spokesman Jim Anderson said the now discontinued program was intended to improve service to members. "This was a pilot program, and it was discontinued because it was determined that it wasn't working."

The bonuses were paid for setting appointments for fewer than 35 percent of callers and spending less than 3 minutes, 45 seconds on the phone with each patient. Workers were encouraged to transfer less than half of all calls to registered nurses for further evaluation, according to internal documents obtained by the *Los Angeles Times*. "We characterize them as morbidity bonuses," said Jim Ryder of the California Nurses Association (CNA), the union representing nurses at the centers. "Patients don't understand they're talking to a high school graduate with little or no nursing background."

The main problem with the centers, the CNA says, is that

unlicensed telephone clerks make decisions about when to send a caller to a nurse or schedule an appointment, which amounts to evaluating a patient's medical condition. Such evaluation is limited to licensed medical practitioners under California law. Nurses at the call-in centers were also evaluated based on the amount of time they spent with patients.

The state's Department of Managed Health Care, which oversees HMOs, has been investigating Kaiser's call-in centers for the past several months, and says it plans to investigate the bonus program.

The 'Tycoon's Club'

An item that won't be appearing in the news anytime soon: The *Guinness Book of World Records* notes that President Bush has "assembled the wealthiest cabinet in American history by appointing more multimillionaires" to top posts than any previous president. Of 16 cabinet members, 13 are millionaires, and seven are worth more than \$10 million. Charter members of the "tycoon's club" include Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, both worth at least \$61 million, and Secretary of State Colin Powell, with assets of at least \$18.6 million.

Once potential laborers come forward, smuggling rings tap into the racket for fake birth certificates and Social Security cards, furnishing workers with the documentation they need to land a slaughterhouse job. "This is not a situation of workers sitting on the other side of the border looking to come and take American jobs," Denier says. "These workers are lured here with false promises and high hopes."

Because of their history as migrant farmworkers, advocates say, Mexicans and Central Americans have been targeted to fill jobs that suffer from high turnover rates. "Very few human beings want to pull chicken guts or hack cow carcasses for minimum wage," says Leone Jose Bicchieri, an organizer for the Chicago-based National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice.

But the Nebraska Beef case didn't end up helping workers. The case stemmed from a December 2000 INS raid on the company's Omaha factory, in which the agency arrested more than 200 immigrants and then deported them, mostly to Mexico. In a strange twist for union and immigration

activists, a federal judge threw out the case on grounds the deportation made it impossible for the company to call workers who might have testified that Nebraska Beef officials did not recruit them or provide them with false documents.

But while the mass arrest initially troubled area workers, it also helped galvanize a coalition of 53 local organizations, called Omaha Together One Community, into organizing at Nebraska's giant meatpacking plants. Says Lourdes Gouveia, director of Chicano/Latino Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, "It took a community-based group to inject new life into local organizing and to dispel the stereotype, even within the union itself, that immigrant workers were unorganizable."

In early May, the UFCW won its largest area victory to date, signing up workers at the Northern States Beef plant in Omaha, owned by ConAgra. Next up is forcing Nebraska Beef to hold a similar election. Earlier this year, the National Labor Relations Board upheld UFCW's charge that it lost an election at Nebraska

Beef in August 2001 because the company trucked in workers from other plants, telling them to vote against the union or risk being fired.

As Tyson undergoes investigation, advocates say meatpackers have become more careful about their hiring practices. Still, Gouveia says all of the slaughterhouses have strategies in place to assess their needs. "They have a certain profile in mind," she says, "and they go after it."

Not surprisingly, labor shortages routinely occur after immigrants begin to shun these jobs, fed up with the nasty and painful work. "What's been missing in all of this is a discussion of what has led to the creation of an economy that has such a need for an undocumented work force," says Joe Berra, a staff attorney for the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund. "What really needs to be addressed is our immigration policy on one hand, and workers rights on the other." ■

Leon Lazaroff writes about labor and immigration issues from Brooklyn.

((((((((APPALL-O-METER))))))))

Using Your Noggin **2.0**

Two heartland geniuses have been sticking to home for the past year or so, since they ill-advisedly tattooed the logo of a local radio station on their foreheads. The *Quad City Times* reports that David Winkelman of Davenport, Iowa, and his pal Richard Goddard Jr. of Rock Island, Illinois, believe they are victims of a malicious prank. They are suing Cumulus Broadcasting, owner of 93.5 KORB, and disc jockey Benjamin Stomberg for breach of contract, fraud and negligence.

In November 2000, Stomberg announced on the air that the station would pay \$30,000 a year for five years to anyone who permanently emblazoned his forehead with "93 Rock." Winkelman and Goddard claim to have met with radio station officials, who confirmed the deal. A KORB flunkie then took them to the Scorpion's

Den, a local skin arts purveyor, and paid for the suckers' tattoos.

They claim that was the last thing they got from the station. Winkelman was fired from his job, and both men argue they have been unemployable ever since.

A Splendid Little Armageddon **9.7**

Some Indians seem to think their country's nuclear arsenal, at 60 weapons, will give them the winning edge in an all-out war with Pakistan, which has a mere 25 nukes. While Pakistani officials have been telling their countrymen that death in a nuclear attack is martyrdom (natch), Indians are putting their faith in demographics. As one colonel told London's *Telegraph*: "India could afford to lose, say, 25 million people. The question is, could Pakistan?"

BY DAVE MULCAHEY

An Oversight **4.2**

Reynaldo Tovar-Valdivia is being a good sport—in fact, downright pleasant—about his request to a federal judge to finally let him out of jail—two years after his conviction was overturned. According to The Associated Press, Tovar-Valdivia was convicted in 1999 for drug trafficking and sentenced to 10 years in prison. He appealed on grounds he was illegally searched before his arrest, and won—and should have been released in January 2000.

Last March, Tovar-Valdivia sent a letter to the Kansas City judge who'd convicted him, wondering if it was OK to let him out

yet. "I would like to humbly request that this court makes an order invalidating my conviction," Tovar-Valdivia wrote, signing off, "Thanks for your time, and have a nice day."

"We don't know what happened," says the clerk of federal court in Kansas City. One assumes that Tovar-Valdivia—who, after all, was the one busted in 1998 with nine pounds of methamphetamine taped to his body—is content to let bygones be bygones.



TERRY LABAN

Free Market Misery

Can Ukraine save its miners—
or its economy?

By Benjamin Smith

DONETSK, UKRAINE—The international coal mining industry has an unusual measure of safety: dead miners per million tons. When the Soviet Union ruled this flat, fertile country of 49 million people, about one miner died for every million tons extracted. The United States suffers 0.02 fatalities per million tons. In Ukraine today, four miners die for the same amount of coal.

These miners aren't paid much for doing what is probably Europe's most dangerous job; in fact, sometimes they aren't paid for months on end. The question, for a foreign visitor, is why they work at all. The answer, according to a blackened 26-year veteran of one mine near Donetsk, is simple: With no other jobs in town, Leonid Volvotch says, "we have no choice. We can only hope that the situation will change."

The plight of Ukrainian miners demonstrates, among other things, the limitations and failings of international aid. Ukraine is one of the world's five largest recipients of U.S. assistance, and the World Bank has lent the country \$300 million for the mining sector alone. "The mines are the most visible sites of crisis in a whole situation of crisis," says Guy Standing, an economist at the International Labor Organization (ILO). "For 10 years [living standards] have been chipping away right across industry, across farms, and across the whole economy."

The country's official unemployment rate is now 12 percent, but outside economists estimate it at more than 20 percent. And Ukrainians have little hope that the situation will improve: Four out of five expect to die in poverty, according to a report released last summer by the ILO. Ukraine's problem is a common one in the former Soviet Union—its post-Soviet leaders knew how to destroy the old system, but not how to replace it with anything resembling the free market they hear so much about from Western advisers.



OLEG NIKSHIN / NEWSMAKERS

Miners in Ukraine are dying at some of the highest rates in the world.

Nowhere are those half-finished "reforms" deadlier than in the mines. Most of the country's roughly 200 mines are trapped halfway between central planning and the market. Structurally, they remain Soviet-style enterprises, running schools and medical clinics for the benefit of their workers, selling their coal to state-run power plants at a fixed price, and prohibited from firing most workers under Ukrainian law.

But the state no longer meets the mines' costs. Power plants often don't pay their bills. State subsidies—which already compose 5 percent of the Ukrainian budget—amount to less than half of the \$5 billion the industry has requested. And there are widespread allegations that many mine managers are in league with local businessmen, selling them coal at a discount and buying supplies for inflated prices.

And so Ukrainian miners continue to die, in accidents small and large, at a rate of about one a day. The accident on May 21, when the roof of the Glubokaya mine collapsed on a miner, was practically routine. Last August 19, a methane gas explosion in the Zasaydko mine, more than a kilometer beneath Donetsk, ignited the coal dust floating in the air. Flames from the explosion burned 55 men to death.

Yet the miners keep working, even though the Independent Union of Coal Miners estimates that miners across the country are owed \$377 million in unpaid wages. In April, a miner died on a hunger strike for unpaid disability benefits. In

early June, a few hundred miners set out on a march to Kiev to demand back wages.

The World Bank has offered a straightforward solution to the mines' troubles: euthanasia. "Ukraine must close a significant number of mines," says Yuri Miroshnichenko, World Bank operations officer for the Ukrainian energy sector. "Otherwise, the vicious circle will never break. The budget just does not have enough funds to support 100 percent of the coal sector."

Until a change of government in April, the bank's program had managed to begin closing procedures on about 90 of the country's original 280 mines. Thirty-five have been fully closed. Last year, however, a new closure plan was sidelined by fear of the massive unemployment and discontent that comes with mine closures. And the remaining mines are getting more dangerous: The death toll has remained steady, at between 300 and 400 deaths a year, according to figures from the Ministry of Energy.

The Ukrainian government, like its economy, has fallen into the cracks between communism and American-style democracy, and has shown little will to improve the miners' lot. Below the black earth in Eastern Ukraine, change is little more than a joke. On a mine visit one day last fall, 30-year-old Alexander Cherednichenko was resting, his face barely visible beneath a head lamp. He has always worried about safety, he said, but he wasn't about to go looking for other work. "This is the most permanent job you can find." ■

BY SARA BERNDT

Politics of Fear

For Gloria Mendez, the precarious reality of war in Colombia seems to be entirely divorced from the political news that dominates coverage of the conflict. For countless Colombians like her, the war simply exists, and they must try to cope with it.

Mendez, 31, lives and works near the Pacific coast of Colombia as a midwife and as an organizer with the National Process of Black Communities, a group that advocates for the estimated 8.5 million Colombians who claim some African heritage. She helps civilian victims of the conflict recover from the devastating physical and psychological effects of life in a war zone. (Her work is so dangerous that her name and the names of towns in this story have been changed.)

In April, Mendez visited Chicago, hoping to draw attention to the problems in Colombia. "I really want people to know the reality of the situation that many of us Colombians are living," she says.

She describes how the war has progressed in a community near hers. "First, the guerrillas moved in, and they killed people and took control of the zone. And once they had left, the paramilitaries came in and did the very same thing. They killed people both for having 'collaborated with the guerrillas,' and also to take control."

Most analysts date the current Colombian civil war from 1964, when the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) began operating out of the jungles east of the Andes. The Colombian military, accused by its critics of corruption and widespread human rights abuses, battles both left-wing groups, which make their money primarily from extortion, drug smuggling and kidnappings.

Since the mid-'90s, the largest right-wing paramilitary group, the United Self-Defense Groups of Colombia (AUC), has worked closely with the military, doing its dirty work in rural areas with brutal counterinsurgency techniques. As a result of the war, more than 2 million citizens have been driven from their homes and towns.

But it's not necessary to understand the politics to understand the problems for average Colombians, whose lives are controlled by the fighting. In April 2001, paramilitaries massacred dozens of people, some with chain-

saws, and displaced thousands in a days-long operation along a river near Mendez's hometown of Santa Elena.

Soon after, a man arrived warning of a paramilitary incursion into the neighboring town of Boyacá. "This, of course, caused panic," Mendez says. "We began to think, who was killed? Who was able to run up into the hillsides around the river? And then we found out that there were seven who had been killed in the worst way possible, not with a chainsaw, but with an axe."

The people of Santa Elena barely had time to process this news before those fleeing from Boyacá began to arrive en masse.

"When they arrived they had no place to stay," Mendez says. "There would be five or six families in one house." To help the refugees, she says, "We put into place a food-gathering campaign, ask[ing] that people in the region provide for the people who had just gotten there until assistance arrived."

Mendez says that displaced people usually receive humanitarian aid from both the Colombian government's social services and the Catholic Church. But the harsh reality of living in the midst of war means that what aid the Boyacá residents did get "wasn't really enough."

Soon after the killings, government agencies tried to get the townspeople to return to Boyacá. But Mendez says they "refuse to go back, because of the fear. So everybody that lived in Boyacá basically created a new neighborhood in [another] community upriver." With her group's help, she says, the refugees were able to stay in their region rather than move to a city, where they would have known no one and

been less likely to find long-term assistance.

The situation on the coast is still tense. Few massacres have occurred in the last year, Mendez says, "but now they're killing people individually, when they leave the region." The people of Santa Elena are still anxious about their most basic needs. "What we're really concerned about right now is food security, since we know that [armed] groups control the supply of food to the region."

Mendez knows the United States has sent nearly \$2 billion in aid, the majority of which has gone to the military, to Colombia since 2000. "The type of aid that the United States



Two women stand over massacre victims killed in February 2001 by the FARC. Witnesses say the civilians were accused of sympathizing with paramilitary forces.

is giving is not the kind we want," she says. "If in fact the United States really wants to help the people [of Colombia], they should be doing it [by] addressing where the problem of violence really comes from: the social inequality."

It doesn't seem to matter to her which armed group is responsible—she just wants the war to stop. "Maybe it isn't something that I'll ever see," she says, "but I would hope that the people in my community would be able to live in peace, in good conditions. What I'm doing, somebody has to do." ■



Sierra Leone
emerges
from
10 years
of brutal
civil war

The Path to Peace

By Greg Campbell

Like many others whose arms were amputated by the drugged teen-age rebels of the Revolutionary United Front, Ismael Dalramy pleaded with his captors to kill him when he saw the fate that awaited him in 1996. But like the others in the small West African nation of Sierra Leone, his desperate plea was ignored—and the blade of a crudely made ax was slammed through the bones of his arm.

Dalramy became one of thousands of amputation victims, walking symbols not only of the RUF's depravity, but of the message they wanted to spread to their countrymen: that people without hands couldn't use them to cast votes against the rebels.

On May 14, 2002, Dalramy and hundreds of others like him, proved the RUF wrong during an election that was every bit as tense and dramatic as the war it sought to officially end.

Sierra Leone should have been the Saudi Arabia of West Africa, with its vast wealth of diamonds, gold, bauxite and rutile. While Freetown was a fairly modern city, most upcountry cities and villages were linked only by crumbling blacktop roads or rutted mud paths. Health care, educational facilities and utilities were woefully inadequate there. When it first invaded from Liberia in 1991, the RUF tapped into rampant upcountry disenfranchisement with the government in Freetown, which many believed had plundered the country's wealth at the expense of the 85 percent of the population that lived in the bush.

Since 1991, Sierra Leone has been a killing field the size of South Carolina. RUF rebels battled government soldiers, indigenous militias, mercenary armies, regional security forces and U.N. peacekeepers for control of the country, which sends \$25 million to \$125 million worth of gemstones per year into the maw of the international diamond industry.

When the United Nations finally disarmed the rebels and declared the war over in January of this year, Sierra Leone was little more than smoking, bone-filled corpse of a nation populated with mutilated civilians and some 50,000 recently disarmed and unemployed guerrilla fighters. The battered nation seemed only a thin excuse away from yet another plunge into anarchy and slaughter. The recipe for this disaster seemed to be the elections themselves, an ominous final showdown between three of the various factions that have torn the country apart since the beginning of the war.

Among those vying for leadership of the country were Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the man elected president in 1996, whose call for his countrymen to "join hands for the future" spurred the RUF to sharpen their blades and deliver bags of amputated human limbs to the presidential palace in Freetown; Johnny Paul "J.P." Koroma, a junta leader who overthrew Kabbah in an apocalyptic 1997 coup alongside the RUF; and the RUF itself, under the flag of its fledgling political wing, the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFFP). Even the party's campaign slogan was a thinly veiled threat: "Only the RUFFP can ensure peace."

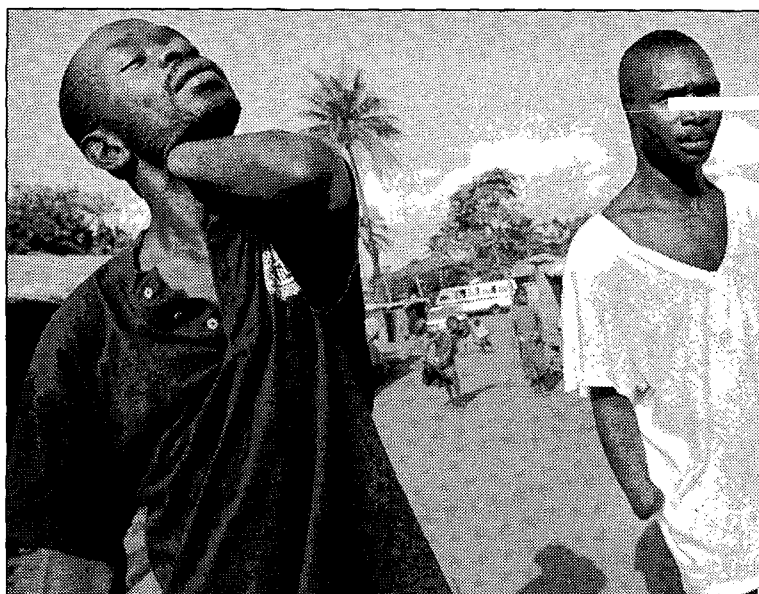
The RUF has been wildly unpredictable in its previous approaches to peace. Every previous deal or agreement had gone down in a hail of gunfire, and it seemed Sierra Leone's war might not end until everyone was dead. Even the controversial 1999 Lome peace accord, in which the rebel leaders were granted government posts, oversight of the diamond mines and amnesty for war crimes—everything they ever wanted—was a flaming disaster. Historically, the RUF preferred to keep on fighting rather than face war crimes charges; one reason the Lome accord got nowhere was that U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan signed an amendment to the agreement stating that he didn't approve offering the rebels amnesty. Most of the RUF force refused to disarm, and eventually the rebels took more than 500 U.N. peacekeepers hostage in late 1999.

Throughout the summer of 2001, while many of its members were still armed and in control of the jungle diamond mines, the RUF campaigned for votes and support throughout Freetown, home to many of its victims. Even in the Doctors Without Borders camp for amputees and war wounded, where limbless civilians like Ismael Dalramy lived in squalor, RUF campaign posters littered the concrete walls. It was difficult for those without hands to rip them down and trash them.

Yet through a combination of terror and a lack of tangible results from other political parties, the RUF seemed to be morphing from one of the world's most degenerate fighting forces into a legitimate political movement. The RUF's primary obstacle was the lack of a candidate. The rebellion's founder and titular leader, former army corporal Foday Sankoh, was in prison facing murder charges, and the RUF leadership had tried everything from a prison break to the threat of warfare to get him released. Acting RUF leader Issa Sessay argued for Sankoh's freedom, claiming that only "Pa Sankoh" could convince his drugged child-soldiers to lay down their weapons and give up their lives of pillage to work odd jobs.

Without Sankoh's help, the disarmament program administered by the U.N. Mission in Sierra Leone had taken weapons away from 47,000 soldiers by January, from both RUF and their indigenous-militia enemies, the Kamajors. Twenty-five thousand weapons were destroyed, and the war was declared over. But the months between then and the May elections represented a dangerous vacuum of idleness and uncertainty: A U.N.-administered reintegration program, which sought to teach former fighters skills such as masonry and carpentry, was \$7 million short. Most of those who'd been disarmed were left to kick around the country with nothing to do—an unstable population that the RUF could quickly rally to take up arms if they decided to scuttle the peace process.

There was no lack of excuses for the RUF to choose this course. The United Nations and the Sierra Leone government weren't budging on the issue of releasing Sankoh (and, in fact, had barred him from being a candidate because he wasn't registered to vote). Adding insult to this injury, from the RUF's perspective, was the U.N. Special Court for Sierra Leone. A hybrid war crimes tribunal that blends local and international laws, the Special Court was given an especially lean budget—\$60 million for three years—meaning that prosecutors would not have the luxury of chasing the conflict's "little fish," as they had in Bosnia. They'd have to strike at the main players—and the likely first candidate for prosecution is Sankoh.



Thousands of amputation victims are walking symbols of the RUF's de...

There were other problems for the RUF leading up to the elections. The organization that for years had funded its warfare with diamond sales was practically broke. The party's leaders asked the United Nations to establish a political trust fund in its name, a provision of the Lome accords. Even though that agreement was defunct, U.N. officials astutely agreed to do so. A refusal would have risked the RUF turning its back on the elections. The rebels hustled an unknown candidate named Pallo Bangura onto the ballot. His platform consisted of a single plank: that he knew nothing of the RUF's decade of human rights violations.

In what he refers to as his "other life," Johnny Paul "J.P." Koroma and the mutinous former army soldiers of his Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) sacked Freetown along with the RUF. On May 25, 1997, the two groups combined forces to overrun the capital and send recently elected President Kabbah into exile in neighboring Guinea. The coup was the bloody end of a peace deal signed between Kabbah and the RUF, and seemed to be conducted as much against the city's civilian population as against the freely elected government. Bodies rotted in the streets and rolled in the surf of Freetown's white-sand beaches. Fighters high on marijuana and dressed in women's wigs stolen from downtown stores chased Nigerian peacekeepers serving ECOMOG—a regional security force—to the beach district, and then slaughtered them. ECOMOG responded by using jet fighters and artillery to shoot at civilian targets in the city.

Like the RUF and its leaders, Koroma was interested in stuffing his pockets with diamonds. In exchange for aiding in the RUF's capture of Freetown, Koroma was given a cut of the goods—but he was unhappy with his percentage. When ECOMOG finally reclaimed Freetown months later, Koroma was evacuated with the help of the RUF. As they were helping him flee into Liberia, they discovered a large cache of rebel diamonds in his pockets—which they seized. He crossed the border at gunpoint, told never to return.

Hated by both the RUF and the government, it's somewhat astonishing that Koroma reappeared in Freetown last year. Gone from his side was "Hiroshima Bomb," Koroma's skirt-and-bowler-clad bodyguard who liked to wear necklaces made of

machine-gun bullets. In his place were more subdued-looking security guards, wearing suits and sunglasses. Koroma claimed to have found God and believed he was the one person who could heal Sierra Leone.

Then there was Kabbah, who had been elected president the last time Sierra Leone voted in 1996. He too had his flaws. While exiled to Guinea, he'd attempted to evade U.N. sanctions on weapons sales to Sierra Leone, using diamond-mining concessions to bargain with a British-based mercenary corporation for 35 tons of Bulgarian weapons. And once reinstated in March 1998, he embarked on a paranoid roundup of suspected coup plotters. Nevertheless, given the rest of the contenders—who also included five other little-known candidates from established mainstream parties—Kabbah represented the country's best hope. Not only was he clearly favored by voters, but he had the support of U.N. administrators and foreign leaders.

The final ingredient in the elections was the voters. In an amazing display of courage and resilience, 2.27 million people out of an estimated population of 5 million were registered to vote just five months after the end of the war. With tens of thousands of refugees still stranded in neighboring countries and many upcountry villages and towns utterly destroyed, the figure astonished seasoned U.N. election monitors.

Kabbah won in a landslide, taking 70 percent of the vote. Koroma came in a distant third, with just 6 percent. The RUF vote collapsed throughout the country, not even winning enough to be statistically significant. Blame for the RUF's sad showing was put on infighting, disorganization and lack of

money. But the voters clearly rejected the party's claim that it was acting in the best interest of the citizens it had terrorized and murdered.

It's too soon to say if the fate of the RUF and the RUFP was decided at the ballot box, but signs are pointing in that direction. Sankoh remains in jail. Bangura officially conceded defeat a week after the ballots were finally counted and certified. In the eastern RUF stronghold of Kailahun, commanders handed over a slew of communications equipment, stating they no longer needed "items of war." High-ranking RUF members are jumping to other parties.

The critical question now is what President Kabbah will do with his victory. Diamond-mining is once again in the hands of the government. But without a good-faith effort to spread the wealth beyond Freetown and into the provinces—which face years of postwar rebuilding—the feelings of disenfranchisement will surface anew. Kabbah must display the courage and resilience of those who returned him to office if the peace so fleetingly tasted in the past six months is to hold.

A U.N. monitor told reporters it was "nothing short of a miracle" that the election was conducted without violence. More astonishing still is the fact that, although thousands were mutilated or killed for daring to show up during the last election, some 80 percent of those registered cast a ballot. Like others without hands, Ismael Dalramy marked a ballot with his toe. ■

Greg Campbell is a freelance journalist and author of Blood Diamonds: Tracing the Deadly Path of the World's Most Precious Stones, to be released in September. He spent two months in Sierra Leone in late 2001. Campbell lives in Colorado.

Diamonds Are a Dictator's Best Friend

Millions of dollars worth of gemstones mined by RUF rebels—U.N. estimates put the figure as high as \$125 million per year—have flowed from the jungle battlefields of Sierra Leone to wedding altars the world over. Diamonds have provided the RUF with millions in modern weaponry and have enriched its leaders and their foreign patrons, especially Liberian President Charles Taylor.

Easily smuggled on a person's naked body, diamonds don't set off airport metal detectors. And once cut and set in jewelry, they are almost impossible to trace. The international diamond industry has known all along that some of the stones it was purchasing on the "open market" in Africa were being used to fund some of the worst wars on the continent—though such tainted gems likely account for only 4 or 5 percent of the world output.

Throughout the '90s, countries near Sierra Leone—Gambia, Guinea, Liberia Ivory Coast—all exported diamonds that far exceeded what they could possibly produce. Liberia, for example, seemed to outproduce South Africa, exporting an average of 6 million carats of diamonds to Belgium annually from 1994 and 1998, when its mines were only capable of producing, at most, 150,000 carats per year.

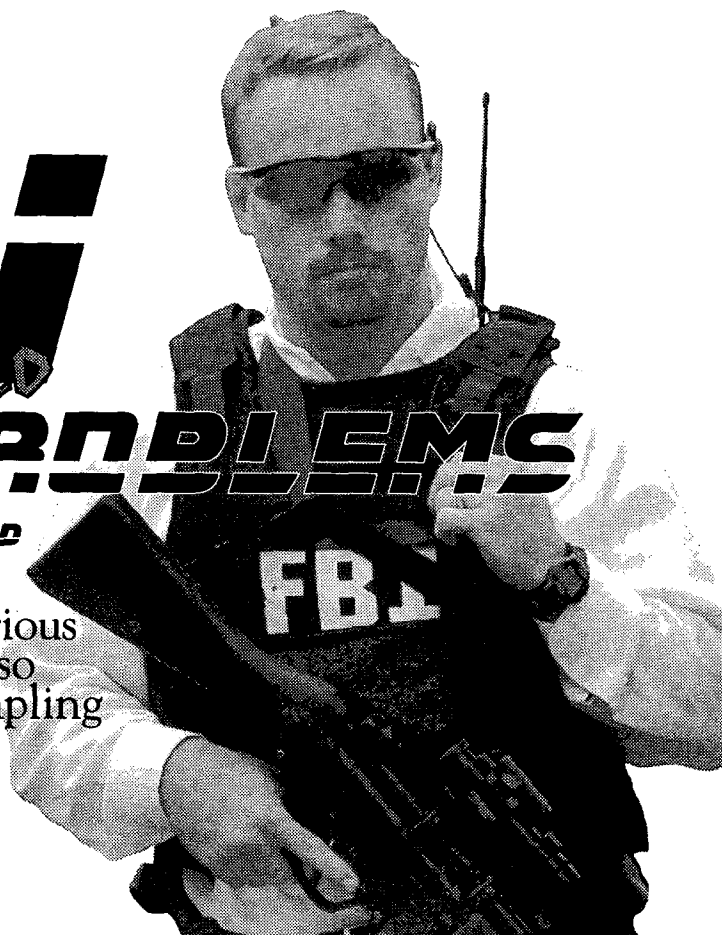
Recent certification schemes adopted by diamond-importing countries have yet to prove they can stop the flow of "blood" diamonds to the international market. The best way to end the trade, it seems, would be to end the conflicts where diamonds are found. —G.C.



ALL PHOTOS BY CHRIS HONDROS/GETTY IMAGES

'NEW' FBI SAME OLD PROBLEMS

BY DOUG IRELAND



What do you do with a federal agency of notorious incompetence that is also famous for regularly trampling on the Constitution?

If you're George W. Bush, you give it more money and power.

That's exactly what happened when the "reorganization" of the FBI was announced on May 29 by Attorney General John Ashcroft. By giving the FBI *carte blanche* to spy on speech and ideas—from libraries to the Internet, from religious groups to political meetings—and by opening its files and agents to unprecedented levels of cooperation with the CIA (heretofore prohibited from domestic spying), the Bush administration has taken another giant step toward turning this nation into a garrison state.

Legal wiretap spying on Americans had already increased in the first year of the Bush administration by 25 percent, according to the annual report of the federal court system. Federal and state police legally intercepted approximately 2.3 million conversations and pager communications in 2001 (and this number does not include all U.S. Customs surveillance—many of its records were lost in the destruction of the World Trade Center—or the secret investigations done under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act).

Now, under the new Ashcroft guidelines, FBI agents will be able to monitor what you say in Web chatrooms, or in religious and political meetings, without any court order, without any evidence of a potential crime, even without approval from FBI headquarters. For the first time, the FBI also will be able to use commercial databases to monitor the books you buy, the publications you subscribe to, where you travel, your credit profile, and a wide swath of other data.

Even medical privacy is no longer sacrosanct—under new regulations to be promulgated in October by Bush's Department of Health and Human Services, doctors and hospitals will be required to open medical records to HHS and other government agencies (including the FBI) any time they ask, without so much as a court order. It will also be illegal to enter into a contract with your doctor to protect your health information from the feds, and HHS will create a database for every possible ailment, coded down to your individual visits.

This awesome aggregation of new surveillance powers, rivaling those of the Soviet KGB at its height, is all the more disturbing because the FBI has long been the federal government's version of the Keystone Kops. Remember Richard Jewell, the security guard falsely accused by the FBI—in deliberate press leaks—of the bombing at the Atlanta Summer Olympics? Then FBI director Louis Freeh, in his grudging public apology to the innocent Jewell, blamed FBI field agents for "a major error in judgment."

Now field agents will be able to go on fishing expeditions of their own without seeking approval from the Washington hierarchy. Yet the FBI recently has given ample proof of its inability to carry out even the simplest of investigative and analytical tasks, let alone distinguish the guilty from the innocent. Consider everything from Waco to Wen Ho Lee, from the "missing" FBI files in the case of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh to the failure (even after unmasking CIA traitor Aldrich Ames) to administer regular mandatory polygraph tests that could have discovered the Russian spy in the bureau's midst, Robert Hanssen.

Yet when these hydra-headed errors have been exposed, the insular, secretive and self-protective culture that characterizes the FBI has led to brazen cover-ups. Thus, when FBI scientist Frederic Whitehurst told his superiors how the bureau's own crime labs had so little quality control that hundreds of prosecutions were questionable, the denizens of the J. Edgar Hoover Building suspended and transferred Whitehurst, instead of adopting his proposed reforms.

The new FBI guidelines take us straight back to the days of domestic spying under COINTELPRO, the bureau's "counter-intelligence" program in the '50s, '60s and '70s. According to the Senate's Select Committee to Study Government Operations, COINTELPRO was "a sophisticated vigilante oper-

ation aimed squarely at preventing the exercise of First Amendment rights of speech and association."

COINTELPRO infiltrated radical and dissident groups engaged in lawful dissent; used *agents provocateurs* to push dissenters into extremist and unlawful actions; engaged in disinformation campaigns and harassment of protest organizations, including those of the civil rights movement; and in the process drove thousands of radical activists toward burnout and despair, as they blamed themselves for problems and errors that were the result of the FBI's disruptions. Given this history, the notion that the bureau will limit itself to passive domestic spying under the new guidelines stretches credulity to the breaking point.

The previous guidelines, which have now been thrown out the window by Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert Mueller—and which required the bureau to show evidence of a crime before engaging in domestic spying—were promulgated by Ford administration Attorney General Edward Levi to prevent another COINTELPRO and other abuses of civil rights and liberties. But even the Levi guidelines didn't prevent the FBI from going off on its own. In 1987, a decade after they went into effect, the Center for Constitutional Rights exposed the CISPES investigation of activists opposed to U.S. policy in Central America. The FBI had been keeping files on lawful dissenters and infiltrating peace groups to weaken opposition to U.S. government support for dictatorships and death squads in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Nearly as scandalous as the new Ashcroft guidelines has been the failure of the Democrats' poll-driven congressional leadership to denounce them. (A Gallup Poll shows two-thirds of Americans view the FBI favorably—and 8 in 10 surveyed continue to approve of Bush.)

The alarm has been sounded, but, as of this writing, only by a few constitutionally minded Republicans. House Judiciary Committee Chairman James Sensenbrenner Jr. of Wisconsin told CNN's *Novak, Hunt, & Shields* show: "I get very, very queasy when federal law enforcement is effectively going back to the bad old days when the FBI was spying on Martin Luther King. ... The Levi guidelines were designed to prevent that from happening again, and nothing has told me that adherence to the Levi guidelines were what caused 9/11." (As the widely publicized Phoenix and Rowley memos revealed, the FBI could not even digest and act on the information it had accumulated on the terrorists under the Levi guidelines before 9/11.)

By contrast, neither Tom Daschle nor Dick Gephardt (mindful of their presidential ambi-

tions) has uttered a word of criticism of the Ashcroft guidelines. (Gephardt's opportunism knows no bounds: In a major foreign policy address on June 4, he even leaped on the attack-Iraq bandwagon, giving Bush a green light for this new military adventure at a time when the military has signaled its opposition.)

The Democratic chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Vermont's Patrick Leahy, has given a blanket endorsement to FBI Director Mueller (who has been assiduous in courting his "oversight" as chairman); and in TV appearances after Ashcroft announced the new guidelines, Leahy showed himself as toothless as he was when he led Senate approval of the civil liberties-shredding USA Patriot Act.

The polls also have silenced the journalistic eunuchs of the mass media, who have been remarkably quiescent on the new threat to our civil liberties (with a few notable exceptions, like conservative *New York Times* columnist William Safire). Within 36 hours after Ashcroft unveiled the seismic policy changes, the story had effectively disappeared from the radar screen.

What all this means is that we are now entering a period that Sam Smith, editor of *The Progressive Review*, rightly describes as "Post-Constitutional America." And in the present jingoistic climate, once our Bill of Rights protections against government abuse of power are given away, one by one, we won't get them back. That's arguably the terrorists' greatest victory to date. ■

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Back to the Brink

By Amitabh Pal

The recent tensions between India and Pakistan could be dismissed as just another round in their interminable conflict—were the potential consequences not so terrifying.

The latest crisis arises out of a number of dramatic terror incidents in India. On October 1, a suicide bombing of the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly in Srinagar killed 40 people. On December 13, a suicide squad apparently linked to the Kashmir cause (and alleged by Indian officials to be Pakistanis) attacked the Indian Parliament and killed 14 people. This prompted India to launch its ongoing buildup of hundreds of thousands of troops on the India-Pakistan border.

Then, on May 14, terrorists (whom India also accuses of being Pakistanis) attacked an Indian army camp, killing 30 people, mostly women and children. Shortly thereafter, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee told his forces in Kashmir—over which the two countries have fought three major conflicts, and where a Pakistan-backed insurgency has raged since 1989—to prepare for a “decisive victory.”

Gen. Pervez Musharraf promised in a January 12 speech to deal firmly with militant groups operating within Pakistan. At the time, this seemed like a major breakthrough. “A president of a country can’t make such a speech and then not implement it,” Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid said at the time. “He should be taken more seriously by India.” But Rashid writes in the May 30 issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* that “Musharraf’s promised crackdown was a sham. Some 2,000 militants were freed after a few weeks.”

The recent incidents in India have aroused global indignation. The chorus of voices asking Pakistan to control terrorist incursions across the Kashmir border includes President Bush, Russian President Vladimir Putin, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, E.U. foreign policy chief Javier Solana and British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw. The question now is whether all this sustained international pressure can convince Musharraf to change his regime’s policy—but could he change it, even if he wanted to?

Musharraf, for his part, made a speech on May 27 that was more belligerent than conciliatory. Although Pakistan also has gone ahead with badly timed missile tests, the bravado may just be bluster, masking a change in his Kashmir policy. “This is the kind of rhetoric that you need to make when you are covering



your tracks in retreat,” Najam Sethi, editor of Pakistan’s *Daily Times*, told the *New York Times*.

Observers disagree on the extent of the links between Pakistan and the terrorists. There is no doubt that Pakistan has hosted and trained many of these people. But it’s unclear how much control the government has over them, or how deeply it is tied in with specific incidents like the May 14 massacre. If the militants are indeed acting on direct orders from the Pakistani regime—as India often alleges—how high up do the linkages reach?

It is in India’s self-interest to allege that the entire Kashmir insurgency is directed by remote control from Pakistan, since this lends credence to its claim that the insurgents are foreign trouble-makers rather than indigenous Kashmiris with genuine grievances. But the recent attacks don’t seem to serve Musharraf’s interests. “This is the work of elements linked to al-Qaeda who are bent on destroying Pakistan and destroying Musharraf,” says Ayesha Jalal, a professor of history at Tufts University and author of several books on South Asia. “The timing is completely wrong for Musharraf to indulge in this sort of thing, and the Americans are aware of that.”

Both sides seem intent on playing a chess game, with each move designed to impress domestic audiences. The domestic situation in both countries contributes to the tough posturing. Both sides need to rally their countries behind them, especially with parliamentary elections coming up in October in Pakistan and the recent losses by Vajpayee’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in key states. The questions are how far both leaders are willing to go to retain power, and whether they can back down without losing face.

Musharraf’s credibility in Pakistan has been hurt by the sham referendum he organized on April 30 and by his inability to control terrorist activity in Pakistan, from the killing of Shiite doctors to the blowing up of French workers in Karachi. Vajpayee’s government has severe credibility problems of its own, after a gov-

ernment headed by the BJP failed to prevent—indeed, colluded in—the killings of hundreds of Muslims in the state of Gujarat as reprisals for the torching of a train compartment of Hindus.

Post-September 11, India and Pakistan also have been playing a game of what commentator Achin Vanaik has called “competitive servility” to the United States. The Indian ruling coalition has tried to prove to the Bush administration that India has been as great a victim of terrorism as America and has adopted a similarly tough posture toward its enemies. Pakistan, under intense U.S. pressure, has done an about-face by abandoning the Taliban, its creation, and aligning itself, however half-heartedly, with the West.

Meanwhile, the United States has tried to maintain a balance between the two sides. On the one hand, Washington needs Pakistan’s help to root out al-Qaeda. A major U.S. concern is that any rise in tensions will lead to a cessation of Pakistani cooperation in hunting down al-Qaeda, and the redeployment of Pakistani troops from the Afghan border to the Indian border—something that is already happening.

On the other hand, for the first time, the United States has developed a close relationship with India, one that could pay great strategic and economic dividends in the future, given India’s size and population. After initially being noncommittal, President Bush has directly pressured both leaders, though he seems to have come down on India’s side. “[Musharraf] must stop the incursions across the line of control,” Bush remarked on May 30. “He must do so. He said he would do so. We and others are making sure that he must live up to his word.”

Whenever India and Pakistan talk tough, thoughts turn to the threat of nuclear warfare. The consequences could be almost incalculable, with U.S. intelligence estimates saying that as many as 12 million people could be immediately killed in a nuclear exchange between the two countries. A U.S. Air Force report states that as many as 100 million people could eventually die. How great is the risk of a nuclear holocaust in South Asia as a result of the current crisis?

“I would say that the situation is one of concern, but not one of alarm,” says M.V. Ramana of the Program on Science and Global Security at Princeton University, an expert on the nuclear situation on the subcontinent. “There is concern that the Pakistani army may decide to take some action to counteract India, and then things may quickly escalate out of control.”

Neither India nor Pakistan have deployed nuclear missiles before, Ramana says, and the few reports that they have mated warheads with delivery systems are not very credible. Fighter planes could deliver nuclear bombs, he adds, but that would have to be after the outbreak of combat, thus ruling out a pre-emptive strike by either side. “I don’t think a nuclear exchange is likely because India is smart enough to realize that military action will not get it what it wants,” agrees George Perkovich, senior asso-

ciate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and author of *India’s Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation*.

But neither Ramana nor Perkovich see the United States as being able to do much to stabilize the nuclear situation. “The United States could help India and Pakistan secure their stockpiles,” Perkovich says. “Persuading India and Pakistan to have the United States intervene in their command-and-control systems is the harder part. It is not realistic at all.”

But Ramana adds that the United States could assist in verifying that both countries are maintaining their non-deployment posture. “The U.S. can help on the conventional military front by helping stop the sales of high-tech arms by various countries, which have increased systematically in the case of India in the past few years,” he says. “Since Pakistan hasn’t been able to keep pace, it has relied more and more heavily on its nuclear option, leading to instability.”

Ramana and Perkovich concur that if it wasn’t for India’s nuclear project, Pakistan probably wouldn’t have gone nuclear. “First, China helped Pakistan develop the bomb, and its motivation would have been severely diminished in the absence of an Indian bomb,” Perkovich says. “Secondly, Pakistan itself would have felt that it was unnecessary and perhaps a bit out of reach.”

If they’re right, then it is incumbent upon India to initiate measures to reverse the subcontinental nuclear race. Pakistan, for its part, must firmly rule out a nuclear first strike. But the Bush administration is hardly in a position to lecture either side. The hawkish stance on nuclear weapons of Donald Rumsfeld and Richard Armitage, whom the White House dispatched to the region, doesn’t add to their credibility as peacemakers.

India and Pakistan must also drastically rethink their positions on Kashmir. Jalal says the United States has a positive role to play in helping mediate. This is despite its history of aiding *jihadi* elements in the war against the Soviets (some segments of which are the ones committing atrocities in Kashmir) and of condoning a succession of military dictators in Pakistan, including Musharraf. Perkovich suggests that a framework be established, with the help of Washington, and that India make dialogue contingent on Pakistan’s progress in cracking down on terrorists.

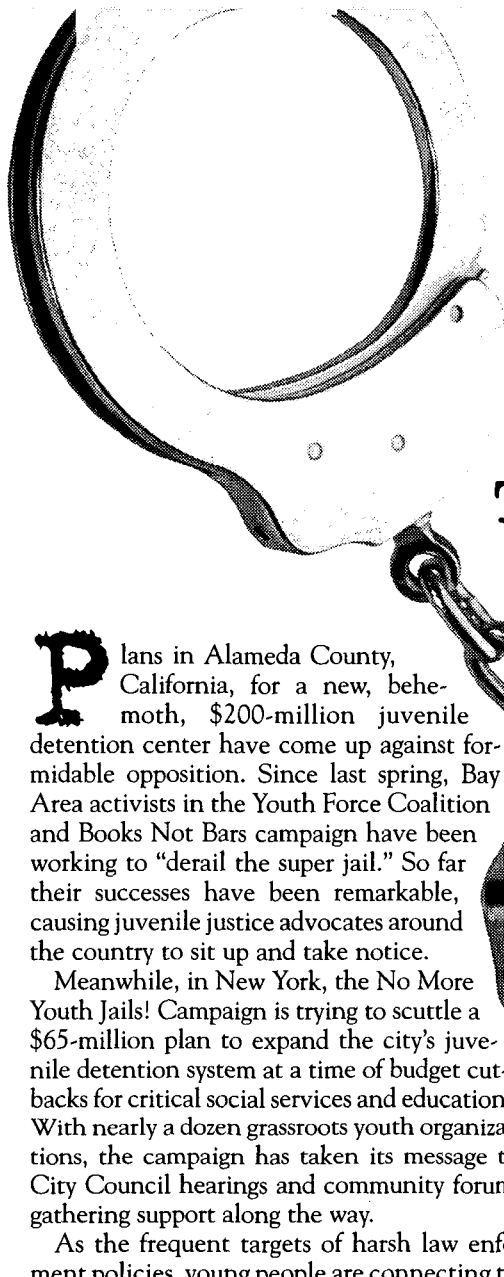
But Jalal argues that the lasting solution lies in a totally different notion of sovereignty on the subcontinent. This would entail broad autonomy for the Kashmiris, with opportunities for them to engage each other across the line of control. But this would require India and Pakistan to change their concept of nationalism and develop power-sharing arrangements on important economic and military issues.

“The mindset needs to end,” she says. “It is endangering the lives of millions of people and doesn’t make any logical sense.”

All easier said than done. But the alternative is endless rounds of brinkmanship, until the horrendous day when either India or Pakistan decides to do the unthinkable and cross the nuclear threshold.

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When India
and Pakistan
talk tough,
thoughts turn
to nuclear war.



UNCHAINED

FROM THE BAY AREA TO THE BIG APPLE, YOUTH ACTIVISTS TARGET JUVENILE JAILS

BY ANNETTE FUENTES

Plans in Alameda County, California, for a new, behemoth, \$200-million juvenile detention center have come up against formidable opposition. Since last spring, Bay Area activists in the Youth Force Coalition and Books Not Bars campaign have been working to “derail the super jail.” So far their successes have been remarkable, causing juvenile justice advocates around the country to sit up and take notice.

Meanwhile, in New York, the No More Youth Jails! Campaign is trying to scuttle a \$65-million plan to expand the city’s juvenile detention system at a time of budget cut-backs for critical social services and education. With nearly a dozen grassroots youth organizations, the campaign has taken its message to City Council hearings and community forums, gathering support along the way.

As the frequent targets of harsh law enforcement policies, young people are connecting the dots between the booming prison economy and dwindling investment in public schools and delinquency prevention. “The prison-industrial complex has replaced the military-industrial complex in sucking up public resources,” says Mishi Faruquee, director of the juvenile justice project of the Correctional Association in New York. “For young people of color, their communities have been devastated.”

Rachel Jackson, state field director of Books Not Bars, a project of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights in San Francisco, echoes that view. “The issue right now in California is the trade-off between education and incarceration,” Jackson says. “Everyone knows someone who’s been kicked out of school or locked up in the hall. The system is setting young people up for a life of incarceration.”

Juvenile detention is a catch basin for young people with a variety of needs and problems, and only a small fraction of them are charged with serious violent crimes. In New York, for example, just 10 percent of detained youth in 2001 were charged with a felony. Indeed, although juvenile crime rates are falling, youth arrests for misdemeanors and delinquency remain high. At the discretion of police or a family court judge, youth land in detention if they are

charged with a crime and awaiting a court appearance, or if they violate probation. Truants can be detained as punishment. Youth in the foster-care system or with an unsafe home environment can land in detention if a judge rules there is no other appropriate placement.

Coloring an already unjust situation is the racial and ethnic disparity in juvenile detention—which mirrors the adult prison population. Black and Latino adolescents and teens from the poorest neighborhoods bear the brunt of police arrests and detention far out of proportion to their population. In New York City, 95 percent of detained youth are black or Latino, even though they represent only two-thirds of that age group. Alameda’s juvenile hall population is 59 percent black and just 14 percent white, but the county’s juvenile population is 17 percent black and 33 percent white.

In both California and New York, a high percentage of youth are in detention because there is no room in alternative placements, such as group homes. In Alameda, 25 percent of youth in detention were ordered by a judge into community placements, but they’re stuck in juvenile hall because those programs are full. Once in detention, they are spending too long waiting for placement or for a hearing in a court system overflowing with juvenile cases. In 2000, Alameda’s average juvenile hall stay was two weeks; in New York, it was 36 days. “When they put kids in a detention facility for a small offense, chances are they will be back,” says Deborah Vargas of the Center for Juvenile and Criminal Justice in San Francisco. “The longer they stay, the more crimes they will commit when they come out.”

What started the pot boiling in the Bay Area was the Alameda County Board of Supervisors’ plan to replace a decrepit, 299-bed juvenile hall with a 540-bed facility in Dublin, far from Oakland where the majority of detained youth come from. California already leads the country in its juvenile detention rates, and the new structure would make Alameda’s youth detention system one of the largest in the country relative to the county population.

In May 2001, 70 young people from the Bay Area testified at a state corrections board meeting, and persuaded the body to yank \$2.3 million earmarked for the Alameda project. Since then, Books Not Bars and the Youth Force Coalition have held rallies and petition drives, forcing county supervisors to scale back the project to 420 beds. While activists acknowledge that the old facility should be replaced, they say the super jail, even a slightly smaller version, is not the answer. “We’re saying it’s too

big, and it's too far away," Jackson says. "The expansion would add \$10 million a year in operating costs. We say spend that on improved alternatives to incarceration."

New York City boasts three juvenile halls with a total capacity of 405 beds. Under former Mayor Rudy Giuliani, they were brimming with youth scooped up by zealous police enforcing the mayor's "zero-tolerance" crackdown on petty crimes and delinquency. Although juvenile crime plunged 28 percent from 1993 to 2000, youth detentions jumped by 60 percent in that period, mostly because of the increase in misdemeanor arrests and detentions for probation violations. Among Giuliani's parting gifts to New York youth was a \$65 million plan to add 200 more beds to the system.

But with a new mayor and new policing priorities, juvenile detentions have decreased and the facilities are less than 75 percent full. The city's economic outlook post-September 11 is different, too, as deficits loom. But so far, the \$65 million detention expansion has survived budget cuts. "There are so many people who recognize that the plan is unjustifiable, unconscionable when there is a budget deficit," says Faruquee of the Correctional Association. "They are cutting after-school programs and delinquency prevention. Where are our social priorities?"

That same question has been invoked since last spring by the No More Youth Jails! Campaign, a coalition of groups from across the five boroughs. In March 2001, 40 young advocates testified at City Council hearings on the project. Many spoke of their own experiences in the juvenile justice system, gaining allies on the council. "Right now, the campaign has been working to create a reallocation proposal for the \$65 million," Faruquee says. "We have had a series of community forums on where money should go. It's capital money, so it has to go to construction. One idea is housing for homeless youth."

If juvenile crime rates have been steadily dropping, why would officials in Alameda and New York—or anywhere else—pursue costly expansions of juvenile detention, especially at a time of fiscal austerity? There are several reasons, Vargas says, driven more by politics than good policy. First, the federal government is funding juvenile detention projects, but only if the money is spent to increase capacity. So Alameda, which got federal funds, must increase its detention capacity, even if smaller makes more sense from practical and policy perspectives. "Build it bigger, and you will fill it," Vargas says. "If you have lower youth crime rates yet you're expanding your juvenile hall, who'll be filling the beds? Kids waiting for foster care placement, youth with failed placements, with drug and alcohol problems and mental health problems. They have nowhere



Is bigger really better? The federal government is funding new juvenile detention projects, but only to increase capacity.

ROBERT KING / NEWSMAKERS

else to place them."

Another reason is more insidious: Public perceptions of young people are out of sync with reality and stuck on the pervasive myth of violent, dangerous youth. "It's that 'superpredator' myth that is still haunting us in the background," Vargas says, referring to a term coined by conservative criminologist John Dilulio. "That superpredator prediction that we'd need bigger facilities for youth has shaped policy and perception, and politicians have to maintain that. ... It has nothing to do with fact that youth crime is down, or that we don't have to build big."

Yet the activists remain optimistic. Bay Area organizers,

while still pushing for a smaller project, are focusing debate on locating the new facility in Oakland. New York's activists are hopeful that constant pressure and financial considerations will force the city to scrap its investment in detention and funnel the funds to capital projects like schools and housing for at-risk youth.

But it is the journey that is proving to be as important as the goal of reforming juvenile justice policy, says Jackson of Books Not Bars. "Young people are finding their voices, finding a collective place and developing their leadership abilities," she says. "They're running these organizations, dealing with the state, doing fundraising. This is the civil rights movement of the decade." ■

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Minnesota Fat Cats

By Kip Sullivan

Ever *wondered* how HMOs can *ruthlessly* cut medical services and still be utterly *incapable* of *keeping down* inflation in health insurance premiums?

The short answer is that HMOs generate high administrative costs that swamp the savings they extract from patients. A massive, six-volume report on Minnesota's Allina Health System released by state Attorney General Mike Hatch last summer, reveals in excruciating detail just how extravagant HMO administrative expenditures can get.

Allina is Minnesota's largest HMO and its second-largest health insurance company. The nonprofit insures 1 million of Minnesota's 4.7 million residents, owns 47 clinics, and owns or manages 17 hospitals. If Allina had been a for-profit company in 2000, its \$2.9 billion in revenues would have ranked it in the Fortune 500. But unlike most companies this size, which have worldwide markets, Allina's market is limited to Minnesota and three border states.

Hatch's report received extensive coverage in the Minnesota media but little attention elsewhere. That's unfortunate, because the report provides a detailed picture of the day-to-day operations of an HMO which no other document has revealed. The report depicts a self-centered, party-hardy culture within Allina that is quite different from the image cultivated by the HMO industry. Allina frequently brandished its nonprofit status as evidence that it was somehow compelled to be a frugal servant of the Minnesota "community," but the report shows that Allina was as capable as any other large corporation at using money and political muscle to silence its critics.

The report (available at www.ag.state.mn.us) lists hundreds of examples of lavish expenditures, including:

- Trips for Allina executives to Aspen and Vail, more than 30 trips to Hawaii, and more than 1,000 trips to California and Florida from 1998 to 2000;
- Flights to Aruba, London, Paris, Venice, Grand Cayman, Amsterdam, Athens, Cancun, Los Cabos, Pago Pago, Puerto Vallarta and San Juan during those same three years;
- \$18,000 worth of Minnesota Timberwolves season tickets for just one executive over three years, and \$5,180 for Minnesota Twins season tickets in 1998 for another;
- \$1 million a year for a "turn around" specialist from California who worked part time and hired more California consultants to host parties for executives, at which they watched the movie *Twelve Angry Men* to learn about group dynamics;
- A \$70,000 company party, \$10,000 of which was for a laser light show;
- Thousands on food and drinks for eight Allina officials attending an "ethics" seminar in Monterey, California, including

- \$1,500 for one meal at the exclusive Club XIX overlooking the 18th hole of the Pebble Beach Golf Course;
- \$1,679 for the cost of one executive's trip to Atlanta, including a \$45 bill incurred at Atlanta's Tongue and Groove dance club;
- \$1,470 for a dinner thrown for Minnesota's commissioner of health (whose job it is to regulate HMOs), former Allina Vice President Jan Malcolm.

The Hatch report should be useful to observers and critics of the HMO industry across the country. If a relatively small, non-profit HMO in Minnesota—the state where the misnomer "health maintenance organization" was invented—can waste premium dollars this brazenly, it is almost certain scarce premium dollars are being squandered in a similar fashion throughout the United States, especially by larger, for-profit HMOs, which dominate the industry.

Allina's troubles began in July 1998, when the Inspector General's office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (which administers Medicare) reported that HMOs serving Medicare beneficiaries had overstated their administrative costs. According to the investigators, these excessive HMO administrative expenditures cost Medicare at least \$1 billion a year from 1994 to 1996. This was an enormous sum, equaling 5 percent to 10 percent of total Medicare payments to HMOs during those years.

To develop a clearer picture of where the money went, the investigators undertook a second study that focused on nine of the more than 200 HMOs serving Medicare recipients at the time, including Allina. (HMOs insure 14 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries.) In January 2000, the Department of Health and Human Services reported that the administrative costs of these nine HMOs ranged from 17 to 44 percent of medical costs, and that five of them charged Medicare twice as much in administrative costs as they should have (the other four HMOs did not keep separate books for Medicare and non-Medicare patients). Inappropriate charges to Medicare included expenditures on gifts for HMO employees like massages and golf games, lavish parties for employees, and tickets to sporting events.

That February, Hatch announced his plans to audit Allina. The Minnesota Department of Health, under commissioner Malcolm, objected, claiming Hatch had no authority. But Minnesota law gives the attorney general the authority to ensure that nonprofits

are not enriching their employees or contractors or otherwise wasting money. (Minnesota requires all of its HMOs to be nonprofit.)

According to Deputy Attorney General Lori Swanson, Allina was uncooperative from the start: "There were delays, we weren't allowed to talk to staff, we had to put questions in writing. They'd give us a partial answer, we'd have to write a clarifying question, and then, eight weeks later, we might get a response. They treated our questions like litigation: If you don't use the right words in your question, you don't get any information."

In March 2001, Hatch sued in state court to force Allina to stop withholding documents. This lawsuit, and the nearly simultaneous announcement by state Sen. Doug Johnson that he was going to hold hearings on Allina's behavior, forced the company to back down. On March 29, the judge hearing the case signed an order approving an agreement in which Allina promised to cooperate fully with Hatch's probe. The following day, Johnson postponed the Senate hearing.

That same week, Allina, which already had more than 20 PR people on its staff, hired several media consultants and a polling firm to discredit Hatch's report. One of the PR firms was GCI Tunheim, which employed Hubert "Skip" Humphrey, son of the former vice president, who had preceded Hatch as Minnesota attorney general. Already under fire for excessive administrative spending, Allina blew \$306,000 on GCI Tunheim and the other PR consultants over the next three months.

When Hatch saw mention of GCI Tunheim's new contract with Allina in a newspaper report, he demanded the documents produced by GCI Tunheim and the other consultants. These documents indicate that Allina consultants planned a media campaign of extraordinary complexity for the spring and summer of 2001. The proposed message was multifaceted, and the proposed messengers represented a cross-section of Minnesota's public- and private-sector leadership.

Messages Allina sought to promulgate included: Allina does good things for battered women and people in a low-income Minneapolis neighborhood; HMO administrative costs are trivial compared to other health care costs; Hatch is setting health policy all by himself; and Hatch's investigation is scaring businesses from coming to Minnesota. (Full disclosure: One memo turned over to Hatch suggested targeting this author, who had published several reports and op-eds critical of Minnesota's HMO industry and of Allina in particular, for "opposition research.")

The documents prepared by the PR consultants identified dozens of Minnesota organizations and individuals that Allina suggested could serve as "third party validators." These messengers included health commissioner Malcolm; former U.S. senator and

Allina lobbyist Dave Durenberger; Roger Feldman, Blue Cross Professor of Health Insurance at the University of Minnesota; Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton; former Vice President Walter Mondale; and various Chambers of Commerce.

Allina's media consultants did carry out a portion of their plan. Sayles Belton and two other prominent Minneapolis Democratic-Farmer-Labor politicians jointly published an op-ed in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* arguing that Hatch's investigation was a cheap political gambit that ignored Allina's good works for poor people and battered women. Durenberger made statements critical of Hatch's investigation on Minnesota Public Radio. Burt Cohen (also on Allina's list of "advocates") published an editorial in the *Twin Cities Business Monthly* that claimed Hatch's investigation was scaring businesses away.

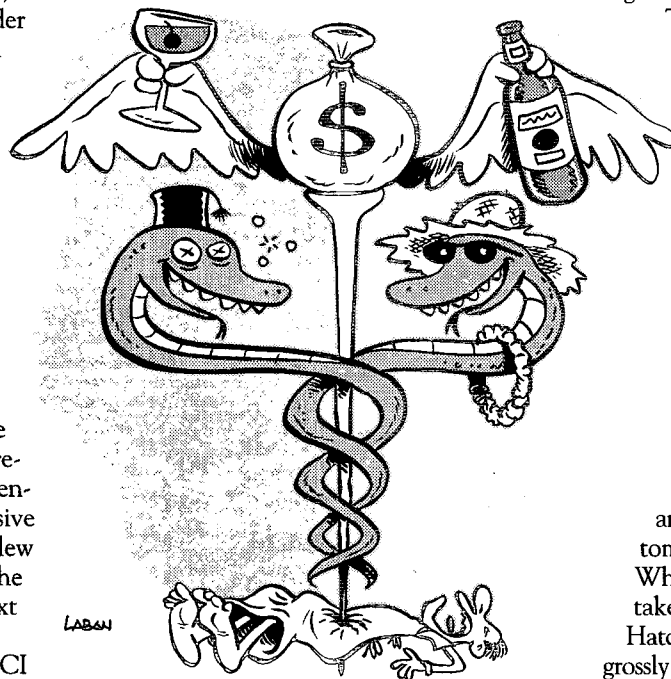
The *Star Tribune* published an op-ed ghost-written by one of the consultants and signed by Allina board chairman Bill George that asserted administrative costs were not to blame for high premiums and that Allina CEO Gordon Sprenger was a good man.

But all of Allina's influence with Minnesota politicians, reporters, editors and professors was not enough to blunt the anger Hatch's documents provoked among Minnesotans, especially among Allina's premium-paying customers and demoralized doctors. While no independent polls were taken of the public's response to Hatch's findings, a poll taken by Allina's grossly overpaid media consultants found that only 19 percent of respondents thought Hatch was "treating Allina unfairly," and 51 percent thought his investigation was fair (the rest weren't sure).

Faced with Hatch's damning evidence, the drumbeat of terrible publicity, and the fact that the state Senate was on Hatch's side, Allina broke itself into two parts—an HMO and a hospital-clinic network—and Allina's board resigned. David Strand, Allina's chief operating officer—who had been expected to succeed Sprenger when he retired—resigned abruptly, claiming he didn't want to run an HMO that didn't own its own hospitals and clinics.

By August 2001, the battle was over. Hatch released the last chapters of his long report in September and announced he did not intend to take any further action against Allina. Shortly thereafter, Gov. Jesse Ventura announced that he would form a task force to investigate the future of Minnesota's health care system.

The breakup of Allina was the first significant reversal of the merger avalanche that struck Minnesota in the mid-'90s. Such reversals are rare throughout the U.S., and Allina's has been the only one forced by government action. Furthermore, Hatch's investigation has changed the way Minnesota's media, policy-makers, and regulators talk about the HMO industry. His dis-



closures forced Minnesota pundits to concede that the HMO experiment had been a failure.

In September, the media reported a chilling epilogue to this tale of corporate arrogance. Allina, whose new board is cooperating with the attorney general, delivered a lengthy report summarizing the results of an internal investigation into what appeared to be an attempt by Allina executives to bribe Sen. Johnson. Strand and others allegedly discussed a plan to persuade Allina's management company, Minnesota-based United HealthCare (UHC, the nation's largest health insurance company), to build a claims-processing facility in Johnson's Iron Range district if Johnson would agree to call off the hearing.

UHC was created 27 years ago by individuals who used to work for an HMO that was part of Allina. Allina also had an unusual management contract with UHC, outsourcing numerous tasks that insurance companies typically do in-house and paying more to UHC than it had to for those tasks. Johnson intimated to the press that he had some inkling of Allina's plan but said he never was approached directly. (The U.S. Attorney ultimately declined to prosecute.)

As lengthy as the Hatch report is (it stands two feet, three inches tall and weighs more than 50 pounds), it fails to measure and evaluate the full extent of HMO waste, including all of the money spent on monitoring doctors and marketing health insurance. HMOs have failed because managed care is a zero-sum game—HMOs cut medical costs and use the savings to police doctors, not cut premiums. Customers need to be informed of how much of their premiums go to pay for administration, including managing physicians and marketing—both by HMOs and by less tightly managed insurers like Blue Cross Blue Shield—if they are

to choose wisely between a private-sector health insurance system, which depends heavily on advertising and salespeople, and one, such as Medicare, that is financed by the government and spends almost nothing on marketing or managing doctors.

The combined impact of HMO expenditures on policing doctors, marketing and the types of expenditures documented in the Hatch report can best be illustrated by comparing the administrative costs of a typical HMO with Medicare, the nation's program for the elderly and disabled. Unlike HMOs, Medicare does not advertise, police doctors, or pay for parties in Pago Pago. Consequently, the difference in the proportion of revenues spent by HMOs and Medicare on administration is immense. If you give a dollar's worth of premiums to an HMO, it will spend 20 to 30 cents on administration, and the rest on patients. But if you give a dollar's worth of taxes to Medicare, it will retain just 2 or 3 cents for overhead and spend the remaining 97 to 98 cents on patients. The strongest argument for a single-payer system is the enormous diversion of scarce health care dollars into private-sector overhead costs.

Even without such data, the Hatch report significantly contributes to America's lopsided health policy debate. The types of expenditures Hatch documented are the sort the public readily understands and condemns. Although public hostility to HMOs is widespread, the battle over managed care is far from over. Most importantly, that hostility has not persuaded George W. Bush to back off his proposal to push Medicare beneficiaries into HMOs. In May, Bush claimed that HMOs save money and that Congress should join him in supporting "reform" that would turn Medicare beneficiaries over to the HMO industry.

If and when Congress holds hearings on Bush's proposal, Mike Hatch should be their first witness. ■

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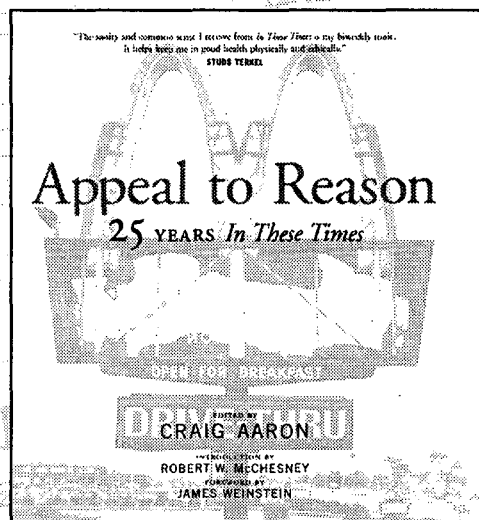
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Popcorn and Sake

By Joe Knowles

In Hirokazu Kore'eda's 1998 film *After Life*, the dead discover that there is no heaven or hell, only their own past. The deceased, finding themselves in a kind of cosmic waystation, have just one task during an allotted week in limbo: Choose one memory, and make it a good one. In the afterlife, it turns out, you meet not your

A Hundred Years of Japanese Film

By Donald Richie

Kodansha

311 pages, \$30

The Donald Richie Reader: 50 Years of Writing on Japan

Edited by Arturo Silva

Stone Bridge Press

238 pages, \$19.95

TokyoScope: The Japanese Cult Film Companion

By Patrick Macias

Cadence Books

240 pages, \$19.95

maker but a film crew. They shoot and edit a re-enactment of your chosen memory, sit you down in a theater on the premises, and whisk you off to the great beyond to live with that memory forever.

Kore'eda's picture speaks volumes about the nature of cinematic reality, especially the way the Japanese have been developing it for more than a century. For if movies are highly selective versions of reality, the Japanese have taken the maxim to an extreme. The country is famous for ultra-stylized presentation—in everything from flower-arranging to head-spinning *anime*—which often piques or baffles viewers in the West used to “realistic” or “naturalistic” ways of showing. In America, even patently unrealistic blockbusters live or die by their special effects’ realistic appeal. “Realism” in the cinema is as much a calculated aesthetic choice as any other, but as audiences, we don’t like to be reminded of that. We tend to deny style even as we rely on it.

This does not seem to be an issue for Japanese audiences. From the outset, when movie cameras first arrived in the archipelago in 1899, Japan simply “had no tradition of the common style known as realism,” Donald Richie explains in his superb new history, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film*. “Art and entertainment alike were presentational, that is, they rendered a particular reality by way of an authoritative voice.” Japan’s classical arts “had assumed the necessity of a structure created through mediation.” In a country where modernity had been declared overnight, the stagey conventions of *noh* and *kabuki*, not to mention the flattened, two-dimensional aesthetic of woodblock prints and *ikebana* flower arrangements, had a lot more to do with the emerging local style of film than any newfangled yearning for perspective or documentary fidelity.



Donald Richie with director Kon Ichikawa, 1965.

Though Japan also had conventional silent films, especially into the '20s and '30s, many if not most of the early pictures were narrated live by a *benshi*, a kind of emcee who would describe and comment upon a procession of moving images for rapt audiences. Although some degree of live narration was not uncommon in other countries, it took much longer for full-fledged narrative films to develop in Japan than elsewhere, in part because responsibility for dialogue and storyline—however slender—was left to the *benshi*, some of whom became famous in their own right. The films themselves, with a few notable exceptions,

remained loose collections of scenes more concerned with atmosphere, educational value or random comedy than with plot. By the '30s, this would change, as the *benshi* lost his job to the talking soundtrack. But the peculiarly cultural need that the *benshi* had filled—a strong sense of authorial presence, an overt stage—did not go away.

Naturally, a culture so deferential toward authority, whether in an artistic or political sense, went hand in hand with authoritarianism. With more consent from the citizenry than the Japanese still care to admit, militarists led the nation on a path of war and conquest that culminated in unprecedented disaster in World War II. The Allied Occupation recognized this dynamic and even censored films thought to be too “feudal” in character. The occupiers may have understood their mission in cultural as well as military terms, Richie argues, but Japan still “has never assimilated anything that it did not want to.” Democracy, yes, but the Hollywood close-up? Not so fast.

How much of John Ford's DNA found its way into Akira Kurosawa, and how much did the latter's samurai epics imprint *Star Wars*? What does splattermeister *du jour* Takashi Miike owe to Quentin Tarantino, and what does Tarantino, in turn, owe to gangster-flick pioneer Seijun Suzuki? The answers to such questions are endlessly arguable, but what is consistently clear, Richie demonstrates, is that on the Japanese side of the equation, even after many decades of ping-ponging cultural influences, “any influence ... is swallowed, digested and turned into something sometimes rich, often strange and always ‘Japanese.’ Any definition of Japanese style has to face the fact that most Japanese are usually unable to handle anything without swiftly nationalizing it.”

There is no Westerner more qualified to deliver a history of that peculiar digestive process—and interpret it for us *gaijin*—than Richie, who, ever since first coming ashore with the merchant marine in 1947, witnessed at close range the flowering of the Japanese cinema's latter half-century. As Paul Schrader puts it in his foreword to *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film*, Richie is the “Commodore Perry of Japanese film history,” first as a modest film reviewer for the Army's *Pacific Stars and Stripes* newspaper and then as an enterprising and influential critic for the *Japan Times*.

A landmark book on Japanese film (co-authored with Joseph Anderson in 1959), the first of its kind, set in motion a prolific book publishing career that led to a stint as film curator at the Museum of Modern Art in New York—unhappily for him, because the job kept him away from his adopted home in Tokyo. But he played a key role in introducing American audiences not just to Akira Kurosawa (already an international celebrity for *Rashomon* and *Seven Samurai*) but also more “Japanese” directors such as Yasujiro Ozu, Kenji Mizoguchi, Mikio Naruse and Sadao Yamanaka. Back home in Tokyo, he went on to author the definitive book on Ozu, while continuing to lobby for such works as Nagisa Oshima’s darkly erotic *In the Realm of the Senses* (1976) and Juzo Itami’s hilarious look at vanishing tradition, *The Funeral* (1984).

But perhaps Richie’s greatest asset as a film critic is that he is not just a film critic. His finest work is not a work of criticism at all but *The Inland Sea*, which can be best described as a novel stitched into a travel memoir’s skin. Richie is an endlessly curious guest, eschewing exotic preconceptions but unafraid to compare and draw differences between his native and adopted homelands. An overview of his *oeuvre*—ranging from novels and memoir to books on gardening and tattoos—reveals an old-fashioned and well-rounded humanism out of step with today’s niche-driven provincialism.

The essential *Donald Richie Reader*, published last year by Berkeley-based Stone Bridge Press, provides such an overview. The *Reader*, whose main entries are graced by numerous sidebars from other books and essays, visually demonstrates how the author’s various enthusiasms and interests have informed and enhanced each other over the years. We get a feel for the way Richie’s mind works as it relates to film, as in an early recollection of sneaking into forbidden movie houses (the occupation had rules against fraternizing with the locals) when he did not yet know the language: “Undistracted by dialogue, undisturbed by story, I was able to attend to the intentions of the director, to notice his assumptions and to observe how he contrived his effects.”

The young Richie had seen nothing like these films before. Where realist con-

ventions dictated that close-ups automatically denote emotional intensity or character revelation, here close-ups were rare. The camera kept its distance, “as though to show the space in between.” And yet “the screen was awash with undammed emotion. ... The very fact that [the characters] were so far away, and crying for such a long time, compelled my moving nearer, and hence feeling more. So different from the big and demanding close-ups of Joan [Crawford], with nostrils large enough to drive a truck into.”

Such was the hallmark style of the Japanese film industry’s postwar golden age. Movie houses were often standing-room-only, and in 1960 a record 547 films were produced. The studio system, moreover, emphasized the ultimate authority of the director, as opposed to Hollywood’s

Japanese Cinema: An Eight-Fold Path

The following eight films may be useful entry points into Japanese cinema for readers interested in further viewing. All are commonly available for rent in North America (except at Blockbuster). —Joe Knowles

Rashomon (1950) This picture, which depicts several conflicting accounts of a murder and rape, was Japan’s first major international hit. Akira Kurosawa uses the trappings of realism, right down to the beads of sweat on Toshiro Mifune’s face, to illustrate the fundamental instability of “reality.”

Floating Weeds (1959) One carefully composed, color-coordinated, close-to-the-floor shot after another reveals the story of an itinerant acting troupe on a trip to a small southern village, where the troupe’s leader faces a secret familial legacy. As beautiful a place as any to start a relationship with an all-time master, Yasujiro Ozu.

An Actor’s Revenge (1963) In Kon Ichikawa’s riot of saturated color, innovative lighting and gender-bending theatrics, an orphaned son obliged to become a female impersonator cleverly plots vengeance on the three rich men who caused his parents’ death.

Double Suicide (1969) Based on a traditional *bunraku* puppet play, this filmed, live-action version by Masahiro Shinoda keeps the black-clad puppet masters in frame. Personifying the oppressive strictures of feudal tradition, the puppeteers hand the actors objects—including a lethal dagger—with which to advance the action.

The Funeral (1984) In Juzo Itami’s enduring debut comedy about an average modern family, no one seems to know how to properly observe Japanese rites.

Ran (1985) A magnificent reworking of *King Lear* set in 16th-century Japan, Kurosawa’s *Ran* is, among many other things, an example of the Japanese knack for assimilating and “nationalizing” outside influences, even Shakespeare. (Seen at left is Jinpachi Niezu as Jiro, a disloyal son.)

Princess Mononoke (1997) The beloved, eco-friendly and ethically sophisticated animation epic by Hayao Miyazaki’s team at Studio Ghibli. (In the United States, Disney’s mangled and star-driven English dub flopped, and for good reason. Watch it with subtitles.)

After Life (1998) Metaphysics according to Hirokazu Kore’eda: No heaven, no hell, no God. Just a film crew.



☞ *Moonlight Whispers*, love hurts.

more producer-oriented system. Kon Ichikawa, asked to make a humdrum period genre piece, turned around with *An Actor's Revenge*, a riotously profound, colorful, perverse and gender-bending masterpiece. And it's hard to imagine any studio—in any country—today backing Masaki Kobayashi's 9 1/2 hour anti-war trilogy *The Human Condition*, one of the rare Japanese films to frankly confront the nation's atrocities during World War II. But that's what Shochiku Films did, making quite a lot of money as well.

Perhaps no filmmaker benefited from the Japanese studio system more than Yasujiro Ozu, the undisputed master of the period, who rewrote the style book with his trademark three-feet-off-the-ground camera position—the point of view, after all, of most Japanese while sitting. For this he was heralded as something of a realist, but he often dismissed the rules of realistic continuity altogether for the sake of sheer pictorial balance, as with a strangely nomadic, brilliantly red tea kettle in *Equinox Flower*. The exquisitely detailed microworlds of his films are exactly framed and composed, but where in real life is such consistent and purposeful beauty found? Yet his films—nearly all of them concern the same tragicomic topic, the dissolution of the Japanese family—palpably stir the viewer's most basic feelings. Ozu shows that tightly controlled artifice can lead to a realism of a higher, more truthful and purely emotional realm.

Shochiku, the studio behind most of Ozu's films, valued him not necessarily for the money he brought in (usually very little), but for the prizes, acclaim and prestige he lent the company. The arrangement was rather like that of the old New York publishing houses, who used to subsidize worthy but uncommercial novelists with profits gained elsewhere. But by the mid-'60s, when push came to shove in competition with television, this enlightened practice was put to an end. Upon Ozu's passing in 1963, a friend of his sadly remarked that it was fortunate that he died when he did, because he wouldn't have been allowed to make movies for very much longer.

The Japanese have embraced video and television like no other country, and the Japanese studios paid an even heavier



price than their American counterparts. For better and for worse, since the '70s virtually all filmmaking in Japan has been a freelance proposition. Would-be auteurs can no longer concern themselves only with making movies; they must cobble together their own funding, find distributors and pray for modest ticket sales to justify their next project to finicky independent investors.

To be sure, the death of the studios suited many filmmakers just fine. Renegade directors like Hiroshi Teshigahara, Nagisa Oshima and Shohei Imamura thrived on the outside and paved the way for today's wave of new independents, for whom international film festivals have become, ironically, the favored pathway to distribution in their own country.

Over the past 10 years, despite economic hardship, Japanese cinema seems to be on the uptick: Nearly 250 films were made last year. The final chapter of Richie's history offers a current overview that is useful, stimulating and argumentative. While I think he's off the mark dismissing a recent classic like Shinji Aoyama's *Eureka* (a nearly 4-hour epic about two young siblings and an ex-bus driver struggling with post-traumatic stress syndrome), the chapter is a small victory for Japan's cinematic diversity at a time when most international attention is directed toward the burgeoning, easily exportable genre of "J-Horror."

An egregious example of such attention is Patrick Macias' *Tokyoscope: The Japanese Cult Film Companion*. Macias has been inexplicably praised as an heir to the Richie legacy, but *Tokyoscope* illustrates all that is wrong with the subdivided world of film geekery. Grossly provincial in outlook, the book oozes with a sweaty affection for today's young crop of horror directors, some of whom are indeed worth the hype, such as Kiyoshi Kurosawa (no relation to Akira),

whose brief interview is one of the book's brighter spots. But the slobbering praise is uniform, whether for veteran porn hacks or newly minted slasher maestros. Elsewhere, a ho-hum rundown of the *Godzilla* phenomenon pales beside what Richie wrote on the same subject decades ago.

The best of today's working filmmakers include the aforementioned Kore'eda, who gave us *After Life* and the mournful character study *Maborosi*. In 1999, Akihiko Shiota made *Moonlight Whispers*, a strangely sweet and tender story about ... teen-age S/M. Veterans Oshima and Imamura are still masterminding worthwhile projects; the latter's *Warm Water under a Red Bridge* is presently working its way through North American art houses. As a sideline to a very multifaceted career, the popular comedian "Beat" Takeshi Kitano makes interesting, if not always very good, gangster films.

But surely Japan's most beloved living filmmaker is the master animator Hayao Miyazaki, whose *Spirited Away* (to be released in the States this fall) recently became the highest-grossing movie in Japanese history. The record had previously been held (though *Titanic* briefly topped it) by Miyazaki's *Princess Mononoke*, a beautiful humanist parable about, of all things, feminism, jobs and the environment. For the past two decades, Miyazaki's films, and those of his independent Studio Ghibli cofounder, Isao Takahata, have amiably demonstrated an ethical sophistication far beyond the reach of most Hollywood material geared to adults.

One slight problem with Richie's indispensable history, and it is not his fault, is that some of his recommendations—actually, quite a few of them—are more or less out of reach, if you don't happen to live in a city with a wealth of filmgoing options such as Chicago or New York (or Tokyo itself). In the world of video, DVD technology, with its multiple language tracks and subtitling options, could help facilitate a whole new level of cosmopolitan shared cinema. But the industry's region-encoding scheme for such discs enhances its free flow of cash while pinching the free flow of culture. After a hundred years of Japanese cinema, one only regrets that the global economy is not as global as advertised. ■

Joe Knowles can be reached at knowles@inthesetimes.com.

The Cuckoo's Nest

By Edit M. Penchina

Subject to the vicissitudes of manic-depressive insanity, Clifford Beers, 24, dropped himself, feet first, out of a fourth-story window, only to wind up, feet broken, in a Connecticut mental hos-

Electroboy: A Memoir of Mania

Edited by Andy Behrman

Random House

277 pages, \$24.95

Mad in America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine, and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill

By Robert Whitaker

Perseus

330 pages, \$27

pital. It was June 23, 1900, "a perfect June day," Beers recalled in his autobiography *A Mind that Found Itself*. "Never had I seen a brighter—to look at; never a darker—to live through—or a better to die upon."

Beers died on a more suitable day four decades later, having carved a two-lane path in the American landscape of the literature of mental illness: one for memoirists, the other for reporters. William Styron's *Darkness Visible*, Susanna Kaysen's *Girl, Interrupted*, Elizabeth Wurtzel's *Prozac Nation*, Kay Redfield Jamison's *An Unquiet Mind* and Andy Behrman's *Electroboy* are, in order of appearance, just a few of the recent additions to the burgeoning genre of mad memoir.

Posthumously, Clifford Beers was praised for his willingness "to exploit his story—and himself—for the benefit of others," praise which might apply to every memoirist of madness. But among Beers' legatees, principal reasons for self-exploitation vary. Styron turned to memoir in the wake of the suicide of Italian writer Primo Levi, impelled by then pervasive ignorance about the pull of melancholy, what *Darkness Visible* renames "the despair beyond despair." It was the one time, Styron says, that he revealed his private self to the public world.

Jamison, a clinical psychologist, co-authored the textbook on manic-depression (or "bipolar disorder") and penned

Touched with Fire, on manic-depression and creativity, before taking her autobiographical turn. Spurred by the recognition that the greatest danger to the life of the bipolar patient is the refusal to take medication, her memoir reads in part as a cautionary tale—told with a sympathy born of near tragedy.

Then, there are the ready-for-my-close-up monologues of interrupted girl Kaysen, Prozac nationalist Wurtzel and electroshock jock Behrman. The film adaptation of the first enabled an Oscar, that of the second is slated for release later this year—with a Wurtzel-produced soundtrack—and the third has been optioned by HBO. Not only does Andy Behrman envision Ewan MacGregor playing him on the big screen, but to stimulate media buzz, he posterized Manhattan and posted electronically to at least one bipolar message board. (Its

diet doctor, an exercise guru and a so-called artist. "I'll represent anybody," he explains. "I'm not very picky." Now he is his own best client.

Sure, media uptake can be an unintended byproduct of self-exploitation. But if entertainment value is the lowest common denominator of these books, then perhaps they are merely the latest forms of engagement in the age-old custom of "displaying the insane."

Michel Foucault identified the phenomenon in *Madness and Civilization*, where he reported that in 1815, England's Bethlehem asylum (a.k.a. "Bedlam") exhibited, for a penny, lunatics on Sundays. In 2002, lunacy's public display is confined to the performances of doe-eyed actresses paid outrageous sums to act like lunatics—the lunatics who sanction the portrayal and sometimes help write the script. Only the exhibitors have changed, and the price of a ticket.

All spectacle, Behrman's *Electroboy* is comparable to others in the genre only barely. Like Jamison's, his illness, though misdiagnosed for years, falls under the rubric "manic-depressive." Like Wurtzel, Behrman underscores the *moi* in memoir. (*Prozac Nation*'s title has got to be the most ingenious act of deception in the genre's history.) Behrman enacts what Kaysen calls the "velocity" of insanity—though any comparison here is a stretch. *Girl, Interrupted* is invested in quizzing the line between the "normal" and the "sick," and in roundly depicting selves stamped flat by clinical labels. *Electroboy* is invested in, well, itself.

Finally, one can say of Behrman's book what William James said in introducing Beers: "It reads like fiction." Which is not to say that it reads like good fiction. More chronicle than memoir (the "memoir of mania" subtitle was someone else's idea), *Electroboy* is a hyper-detailed accounting of the events in Andy Behrman's life: list-making, New Jersey-upbringing, compulsive hair-plucking ("my weirdness took many



administrator nixed Behrman's contribution, citing blatant intent to advertise.) Before donning the cape of "Electroboy ... Fighting Mental Illness," Behrman was a PR man, representing a

forms," he admits), tuna-and-tofu-dieting, Times Square-stripping, art-dealing, cash-freezing, jetsetting, girlfriend-stalking, prostitute-hiring, self-prostituting, art-faking, time-serving, and what he generally calls "the crazies," with little interpretation or analysis. Behrman's infrequent ventures into explanation sound shrink-wrapped: "I developed these defense mechanisms against conflict." The most Behrman is capable of in the way of commentary is, more often than not, "Shit."

Perhaps the unexamined-life story is the perfect approach to representing a manic experience that makes Behrman feel like the "chunk" of brain "that edits my thoughts before they become speech" has been "scooped out." And the reader feels it, too. One longs for what Styron can do with a third as many pages.

Electroboy is mania performed. In *Intoxicated By My Illness*, Anatole Broyard wrote that "every seriously ill person needs to develop a style for his illness," meaning prose style. The manic generally prefer to shop for their style, in sprees. Behrman likes Barney's. Whatever the reason, *Electroboy* reads less as an account of mania than as a look at what happens when the self becomes no more than a product of the stuff it consumes.

For Andy, that self is a function of beverages preferred (Amstel Light, the occasional Pilsner Urquell, Diet Coke over Diet Pepsi, Hershey's chocolate milk), designers worn (Armani, Calvin Klein) slept between (Ralph Lauren), shaved, shampooed and gelled with (Kiehl's) and pharmaceuticals ingested: Prozac (against depression), Klonopin (against anxiety—Andy sprinkles them on ice cream), Ambien (for sleep), Anafranil (for OCD), lithium (for mood stabilization), Depakote (for mood stabilization—Andy takes too many), Zyprexa (against psychosis), Risperdal (against psychosis), propranolol (for Risperdal-induced tremor), Symmetrel (for Risperdal-induced stiffness), Luvox (side effect: retrograde orgasms), Paxil (side effect: no orgasms). Tegretol, Effexor, Wellbutrin, Neurontin, trazodone, Zoloft, Serzone, Artane, Ativan, Lamictal ... at one point, Behrman is on a prescribed 22-pills-a-day regimen.

"Plainly," he writes, "I will never be able to stop taking these medications. Am I more myself on them or less? There's no sense in trying to determine which me is

the real me—in the end, I need the medication if I'm to lead a balanced life. I have a chronic illness, and I can't survive without them." The disposition of what psychiatrists value as a "compliant" or, in the new Psychiaspeak of stick-to-it-iveness, an "adherent" patient, yes—but 22 pills a day? (Today, he's down to nine.)

One would wonder about Behrman's lack of concern about drug dependency if not for his cocaine and crack affinity. ("Smoking crack is like a sport. It should be an Olympic sport. I would be very good.") Behrman is, among other things, one sample from the ocean of souls who seek prediagnostic solace in "self-medication." What he never wonders, even when he finds himself on a gurney headed for the shock room because the drugs aren't working, is whether the amounts and combinations of drugs weren't a huge part of their inefficacy. Neither does he wonder, even when he

The move to more expensive drugs was spurred not by new scientific findings, but by patent protection. Generics were beginning to compete with the older drugs for market share.

finds himself addicted to the anaesthetic preparation he is given before each of 19 shock treatments, is whether all those uncontrolled substances aren't "gateway drugs" to a lifetime of prescription meds. What *Electroboy* ultimately left me asking is whether the likes of Eli Lilly aren't simply the new FDA-approved pushers of Prozac Nation, but its DEA-approved drug czars.

Enter Robert Whitaker of the *Boston Globe*, who walks the second Beersian line of reportage and advocacy. Beers pushed for oversight and reform of the nation's mental institutions, spearheading the "mental hygiene movement." The movement's associated foundation sponsored projects like journalist Albert

Deutsch's 1937 history, *The Mentally Ill in America*. Whitaker's work echoes Deutsch's in more than its title: *Mad in America* is the most important bit of mental health muckraking since Deutsch's *The Shame of the States* was published in 1948.

Part history, part journalism and all polemic, *Mad in America* outlines the developments in treatment and care that have shifted the terms of debate from "restraint versus non-restraint" toward "to medicate or not to medicate." At the ankles of a pharmaceutical industry goliath, Whitaker draws his slingshot back hard on behalf of the "mentally ill"—a category he limits, for the most part, to diagnosed schizophrenics. A moral of "take your meds" often makes sense for people with mood and anxiety disorders, but for the schizophrenic, Whitaker argues, "take your meds" can be bad advice.

Whitaker uses three studies, one from Harvard and two from the World Health Organization, as springboards into his argument rather than as definitive proofs. Respectively, the studies showed that recovery rates for schizophrenics were no better in the United States in 1994 than in 1900, and that outcomes are far worse for schizophrenics in richer countries than in poorer ones—even though 61 percent of diagnosed schizophrenics in the developed world are medicated, while only 16 percent are medicated elsewhere. If medication helps, shouldn't the medicated group show higher rates of remission? Perhaps the significant factor is family and community support, "societal attitudes," "childhood experiences"? According to Whitaker, the problem is "iatrogenic"—bad outcomes are a function of drug treatment.

The drugs Whitaker calls into question are of two types, one older, one newer. Traditional "neuroleptics," a word used because it describes their function of "taking hold of the nervous system," include Thorazine and, 50 times more potent, Prolixin and Haldol. All have been sold on the understanding that schizophrenia is a brain chemistry problem, an excess of dopamine production or uptake, that the drugs "balance." Newer drugs, called "atypical" anti-psychotics because they vary from the dopamine-blocking "norm," include Risperdal—the drug that causes Behrman tremors and stiffness—and Eli Lilly's bestselling Zyprexa. These bear down on dopamine and a host of other neurotransmitters.

Whitaker's critique of the atypicals speaks to the shameful state of commercial drug testing today. In tests run on a for-profit rather than an academic model, the atypicals were "compared" at incomparable doses—biasing results. Selectors chose inappropriate sample patients. And because testing protocols required "wash out"—abrupt withdrawal from other medications—to re-establish "active disease" in test subjects before administration of the test drug, the suicide rate among subjects jumped to two to five times the norm for schizophrenics. Plus, the move to atypicals—some of the most expensive drugs on the market—was spurred not by new scientific findings, but by the schedule of patent protection. Generics were beginning to compete with the older drugs for market share.

Disturbing as that story is, Whitaker is strongest in his criticisms of traditional neuroleptics, mainly because more is known about their side-effects. They include Parkinson's-like symptoms, an irreversible motor-function condition called tardive dyskinesia (rare but fatal), akinesia (an "extreme blunting of emotions" that renders patients "zombie"-like and leads to social withdrawal), and akathisia—a reaction in reportedly three-quarters of Haldol-treated patients that makes them turn violent. Statistically, the mentally ill were no more prone to violence than the general population until neuroleptics were introduced.

Moreover, the receptor-plugging effect of neuroleptics lays the groundwork for an exacerbation of the "imbalance" the drugs were supposed to stabilize. In language as accessible as any newspaper article, Whitaker explains how neuroleptic treatment alters the physiology of the brain, causing the growth of up to 50 percent more dopamine receptors. As a result of heightened dopamine sensitivity, the patient who abruptly stops treatment—like the "wash out" in the atypical studies—is virtually guaranteed to relapse into psychosis. And that psychosis is bound to be worse than if the patient never had taken neuroleptics in the first place.

In one chilling footnote, Whitaker ties just this problem to the case of Andrea

Yates, the Texas woman sentenced to life in prison for drowning her five children. Whether or not she could tell right from wrong when she dragged her kids to the family tub, Yates was psychotic. And whether her psychosis was a result of postpartum depression or schizophrenia, withdrawal undoubtedly contributed to the horrors of that fatal day. Two weeks before, Yates' psychiatrist had taken her off Haldol.

The droves of mental health professionals towing the line that "treating schizophrenics without drugs is like treating diabetics without insulin" will find Whitaker's thesis anathema. Psychiatrist

goes so far as to tout medication for people who "lack insight" into their disease—a view whose forced-treatment ramifications smack of an all-too-nonfictional cuckoo's nest.

More McMurphy than Ratched, Whitaker bolsters his claims—claims academic psychiatry would do well to respond to with fresh data rather than stale rhetoric—with a historical narrative spotlighting the worst in the history of psychiatry: hydrotherapies, spinnings, blisterings, cliterodectomy and forced sterilization, tooth-extractions, insulin comas, spine-cracking metrazol shocks, transorbital loboto-

mies, and electroshock procedures that, in their force and number, make *Electroboy's* sessions look like a cake walk.

And yet *Mad in America* doesn't cite a single representative of the "anti-psychiatry movement"; there's no mention of Thomas Szasz or R.D. Laing. Whitaker sympathizes with alternatives to traditional therapies, but his sympathy is based on documented results rather than ideology. He questions the frequency of schizophrenia's diagnosis—especially among blacks and the poor—and urges a look back at why psychiatry has been so unduly pessimistic about outcomes.

But Whitaker never calls schizophrenia a myth. And he takes schizophrenia out of the hands of French leftists like the earliest Foucault, and Deleuze and Guattari, who read the phenomenon as the ultimate human expression of alienation under capitalism. Albeit inadvertently, Whitaker turns that view on its head—by showing that the "alienated" look of the schizophrenic is less a property of the disease than a side-effect of its treatment, and by identifying the alienation peculiar to the rest of us, who, "as a society, are *estranged* from the 'mad' in our midst."

That's a social ill a heavy dose of reading might begin to remedy. ■

Edit M. Penchina, a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, has been contributing to *In These Times* since 1998. Her writing also appears in issue No. 1 of Croonenbergh's Fly.



E. Fuller Torrey already has, calling *Mad in America* "Nurse Ratched with Footnotes." Torrey's reaction is particularly disheartening given his commitment to the plight of the mentally ill. In *Nowhere To Go*, he outlined the role of money and politics in "deinstitutionalization"—the fiscally motivated bumping of the nation's chronically ill mental patients from state back wards to urban back streets. However, fierce in protecting the prescription-writing territory of the psychiatrist (another in the list of Torrey's titles is *Freudian Fraud*), Torrey has a cataract when it comes to seeing the forces at play in shaping how psychiatrists think about drugs. Torrey's *Surviving Manic-Depression*, new this year,

Inside Out

By David Moberg

When the 1997 global economic crisis began in Thailand, the International Monetary Fund made a bad situation worse by insisting on cutting government budgets, setting tough financial standards for banks and raising interest rates to preserve overval-

Globalization and Its Discontents

By Joseph E. Stiglitz

W.W. Norton

282 pages, \$24.95

ued currencies. Rather than stabilizing troubled economies, IMF policies provoked social unrest and spread the crisis further. Tens of millions of urban workers and rural peasants suffered deeply for years afterward, but currency speculators, foreign banks and multinational corporate vultures picking over bargain-priced assets did just fine.

It was tragic that so much chaos and suffering resulted from these faulty remedies, but what is even more appalling is that the IMF (prodded and supported by the U.S. Treasury Department) had vigorously promoted what economist Joseph Stiglitz argues was the single most important cause of the crisis: rapid deregulation of national capital markets. With that policy shift, foreign investors flooded countries like Thailand with money that was often foolishly spent. At the first sign of trouble, they quickly pulled their money out, often making a killing on currency speculation as they exited. At the time, Stiglitz was chief economist of the World Bank, the IMF's sister institution, and he argued against the IMF strategy.

When these international financial institutions were established toward the end of World War II, the IMF was supposed to help countries with temporary currency problems and maintain economic demand to prevent recessions,

much as the intellectual godfather of the two institutions, John Maynard Keynes, had advocated during the Depression. But over the decades, Stiglitz argues in his new book, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, the IMF mission shifted "from serving global economic interests to serving the interests of global finance."

The IMF abandoned its Keynesian focus on maintaining employment and economic growth and focused single-mindedly on fighting inflation. The shift occurred in large part because the IMF was controlled by and accountable to finance ministries and central banks of the richest countries, especially the United States. These leaders, in turn, were linked by ideology, self-interest and political influence to the big international banks, financial service companies and capital markets.

Neither peasants nor workers, nor even leaders of poor countries, had a voice in

Over the decades, the IMF mission shifted "from serving global economic interests to serving the interests of global finance."



Joseph Stiglitz

the marble halls of Washington. No debate was permitted—internally or with client governments—about alternatives to the "Washington consensus" of fiscal austerity, privatization and financial deregulation (or "liberalization"). Often the policies imposed were even kept secret from their victims.

This looked—and effectively functioned like—a conspiracy by rich and powerful international financiers to

humiliate and control upstart industrializing countries (as well as Russia). Stiglitz says that the IMF strategy was really just a product of inadequate institutional governance and mistakenly rigid ideologies. But in either case, there's no question that a narrow group of powerful people from rich countries were ultimately setting an agenda that profited them while ravaging less-powerful countries. IMF policies rarely even served the economic interests of most people in rich countries.

Because of his academic credentials and insider experience, Stiglitz's condemnation of the IMF (and only a bit less harshly, U.S. Treasury officials) has unusual gravity. He argues forcefully that, for such policies to succeed, even if one agrees with IMF goals such as privatization of government enterprises, one must move gradually and take care that requisite social and economic institutions are in place.

In Eastern Europe, for example, he argues that the most successful transitions from communism were gradual, rather than the shock therapy of rapid, poorly planned imposition of unregulated markets in Russia that created colossal inequality and shrank the economy by more than one-third. Thanks to these free market Bolsheviks, Russia's wealth was looted and spirited out of the country, creating "the worst of all possible worlds."

The heart of Stiglitz's argument is simple and profound, and based on the work that won him a Nobel Prize last year. The IMF and related ideological enforcers of the new globalization are "market fundamentalists" who believe that markets are perfect as long as governments, unions and other intruders stay out of the way. But the theoretical models underlying their policies assume perfect information that will lead to rational results.

Unfortunately, information is never perfect, complete or available to everyone, especially in developing countries. As a result, there is always a role for government to compensate and make markets more efficient. (I would also argue that

gross inequities of power and wealth distort the economy and justify government intervention, even on the narrow grounds of making markets work at their best.)

But governments also have a mandate to ensure social justice and reduce poverty and inequality, Stiglitz argues—which economic growth doesn't necessarily accomplish. Social justice, a worthy goal in its own right, in turn contributes to a

The need for democratic government is at least as great in the IMF as it is on the national level.

better functioning economy by reducing conflict and giving citizens a sense of shared ownership in their national endeavor. Economic development, Stiglitz insists, is not simply a matter of economics, but of social transformation—such as the change wrought by guaranteeing free education to all (undermined, however, by IMF insistence that countries charge fees for education).

Not incidentally, Stiglitz argues, IMF policies act as a new form of colonialism that undermines democracy and national sovereignty, and ignores or obstructs social development. As a result, even in countries with solid growth, like Mexico, the benefits of globalization are concentrated among the top 10 percent of the population, and many at the bottom are actually worse off. Stiglitz has a more charitable view of how his old employer, the World Bank, serves the poor than do many globalization critics. But he convincingly argues that instead of expanding its power, the IMF should narrow its focus and restore its Keynesian mission.

Stiglitz focuses much of his attack on the perils of deregulating capital markets. There is little evidence to show that such policies increase needed investment, especially in East Asian countries with high domestic savings rates. There are lots of problems, in any case, with foreign direct investment, which often destroys local businesses or, in the banking and finance sector, steers credit toward multinationals rather than domestic needs.

At the very least, Stiglitz says, countries should be able to impose short-term con-

trols on flows of capital. Local economies would benefit more from a "stand-still" in payments of foreign debts or speedy reorganization of businesses under bankruptcy laws than from IMF bailouts of multinational lenders that simply leave countries more saddled with debt. China and Malaysia, Stiglitz notes, weathered the 1997 storm partly because they restricted capital flows. Yet despite his desire to tame global financial markets and raise funds for development aid, Stiglitz never mentions imposing small taxes (the "Tobin tax") on global financial transactions.

While Stiglitz observes that rapid opening of countries to foreign trade can be harmful, he chides the United States (and other rich countries) for preaching free trade while restricting access to its markets and subsidizing exports. It's clear that developing countries gained little in the last round of trade negotiations that created the World Trade Organization. But it's less clear how much exporting to the United States will help the world's poor. The successful Asian industrializing countries, eschewing the IMF model, did rely on exporting heavily to the United States. But the U.S. trade deficit has been large and growing for many years, and Stiglitz warns it will be unsustainable over time.

In many cases, multinational corporations benefit from expanded trade, while workers in both rich and poor countries lose out. For example, foreign production has displaced more than three-fourths of apparel and shoe workers in the United States. Yet the real wages of clothing and shoe workers in developing countries have fallen sharply over the past decade, according to trade analyst Alan Tonelson.

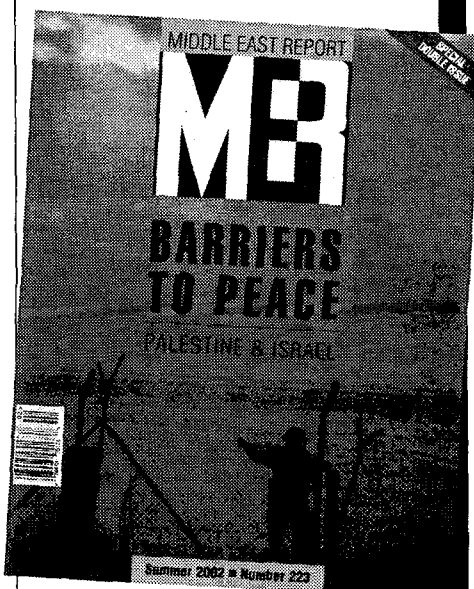
Markets in goods and services can be flawed, and market fundamentalism in trade can be misguided, just as in global finance. Although Stiglitz understandably is most concerned about the 2.8 billion people living on less than \$2 a day, workers in developed countries also suffer from inequality, lost income and hardship as a result of globalization. Stiglitz has argued elsewhere that it's important in development to secure workers rights, but he barely mentions the issue here.

Bucking the tidal wave of market fundamentalism, Stiglitz restores government to a central role in economic well-being, although he seems to retain unjustified faith in privatization as a long-term, carefully pursued goal.

However, government is important not just to make markets work better, but to give people a choice about economic alternatives and to break out of the one-size-fits-all policy mold imposed by the IMF. The need for democratic government is at least as great at the IMF as it is at the national level.

While the protests of those discontented with globalization give him hope, the clear and impassioned thinking of analysts like Stiglitz may also give hope to the protesters. ■

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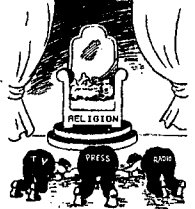
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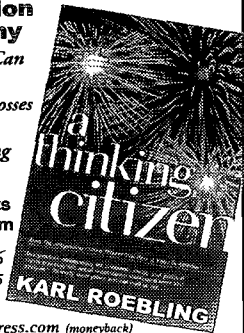
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GOD SAVE ^[us from] THE QUEEN

By Nick Greenslade

If you can imagine being force-fed a whole box of mint chocolate creams, you can catch a whiff of the intoxicating atmosphere that is England today," wrote Christopher Hitchens at the happy dawn of the Charles and Di fairy tale two decades ago. He could just as well have been writing about the present day, for June has been designated Jubilee month. With the promise of a public holiday and "street parties," British citizens—sorry, *subjects*—are being invited to step out and celebrate the 50th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne.

I happened to be back in the U.K. in March when news came of the death of Her Majesty the Queen Mother (HMQM), and things weren't much better. To be there was to appreciate what it must be like in a banana republic during one of those enforced periods of public mourning. Radio bulletins rushed to assure us that "Charles and the boys" had cut short their skiing trip to be with us at this difficult time. In fact, they would even be breaking with protocol by flying together on the same plane. Golly! (Meanwhile, Prince Andrew was hurrying back from a vacation in Barbados.)

Poor old Peter Sissons, the BBC newscaster on duty at the time, put on his best Walter Cronkite November 1963 impression—all furrowed brows and wobbling lower lip—yet still came under fire for the sartorial sacrilege of sporting a burgundy tie. For friends of the Windsors, it has been open season on the "Beeb" since its laudable decision two years ago not to cover the Old Dear's centenary celebrations. That Prince Charles chose rival news station ITN to film his vomit-inducing eulogy to his "dear grandmama" was widely interpreted as a deliberate snub. These people aren't ones for forgetting grudges.

The French prime minister of the early '30s, Edouard Daladier, once described the newly acceded HMQM as "an excessively ambitious young woman who would be ready to sacrifice every other country in the world so that she may remain Queen." This observation may go a long way to explaining her adherence to the doomed policy of appeasement that delivered country after country to Hitler. Naturally, the BBC omitted any mention of the monarchs' role in the advance of the Nazis. Perhaps the most apt comment was uttered by one of the numerous geriatric flunkies wheeled out, who helpfully explained that "deference and dignity were paramount."

In days gone by, critics of the monarchy would

inveigh that none of them could possibly hope to hold down a job in the real world. At the time, this judgment could not be tested. Well, now we can lay the matter to rest. Prince Edward? Resigned from his failing TV company. His wife? Resigned from her doomed PR firm. Princess Anne? Nearly a decade of unabashed corruption passes at the International Olympic Committee before its most famous delegate bothers to say—never mind, actually do—something.

As for the old patriarch, Prince Philip, no self-respecting corporation would continue to employ a man who had made either of the following statements. Upon seeing an old-fashioned fuse box during a factory visit: "It looks as if it was put in by an Indian." Or to a group of British students in China: "If you stay here much longer, you'll all be slitty-eyed."

It would be negligent if I didn't mention the complicity of the American media. Toward the end of its miserable existence, Edward's Ardent Productions was scraping by on commissions from American broadcasters. Somebody must have thought there was a demand over here for such garbage as *Royalty from A to Z*. If Fergie isn't on *Friends*, then she can usually be found in the ad breaks. And whose cherubic looks is it that greet me from the cover of yet another magazine but those of young William?

Not long ago, I chanced upon a poll on the CNN Web site inviting browsers to cast their vote for who, out of Charles, Will and Harry, should succeed the Queen. It would be futile to point out that Americans don't have a say in this matter, that Britons don't even get a look-in, and that to have voted for anyone other than Charles would itself have been an argument against the hereditary principle that is the very foundation of the monarchy.

So I have a suggestion. Since it no longer seems to matter how many votes a candidate polls in a presidential election, and since, in these post-9/11 times, concepts like the First, Fourth and Fifth Amendments are clearly outdated, why don't we swap? You get to have an unelected head of state who doubles up as the titular boss of an official national religion, while we'll happily take from you such apparently antediluvian notions as freedom of speech and a Bill of Rights. But, hold on a minute. That wouldn't be very constitutional, now would it? ■

